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Christian party looks with hope to the future

Paul De Groot and Jim Farrell

EDMONTON — An energized Christian Heritage Party, undaunted by its failure to elect a member in the last federal election, emerged from the party's second national convention here Nov. 7-10.

While most parties might lament only 102,000 votes (four per cent of the total) in about one-fourth of federal constituencies, party members were filled with the excitement of a new venture.

In the best tradition of political conventioneering, many of the 490 delegates whooped and cheered as the convention opened with a parade of flags in a cavernous hall in Edmonton's Convention Centre.

Few flinched when the party's executive director, Bert Vane, said in his final address to the convention that according to his analysis, no CHP candidate would have won in the last federal election "no matter how much money we had, how much literature we handed out or how articulate and qualified and popular our candidates could have been."

Better next time

New party president Bill Andres, a former Liberal MP for Lincoln in Ontario, vowed that the party would do better in the next election.

"In the next election, there will be a change of government and yet there will be no change in policies. I believe we will have a minority government. We are going to elect 20 members in the next election and the leader of the party that will be in power will come to the members of the Christian Heritage Party looking for support for his government."

Party leader Ed Vanwoudenberg said the party "holds the promise for the future of Canada."

"We offer an alternative to the mismanagement and irresponsibility of all the others."

Vanwoudenberg called the CHP "Canada's rescue team, ready and willing and able to work hard to assume control of the ship not for the sake of power but for the sake of service."

In a speech at the convention banquet, Vanwoudenberg said Canada cannot continue further governance by non-Christian parties and must look for a Christian solution.

"If we fail we will crumble like sand blown away by the winds of compromise."

The meeting included at least one American observer and two delegates from New Zealand's new Christian Heritage Party. The New Zealand version was specifically modelled on the Canadian party, and drew its initial support from a groundswell of opposition to new homosexual rights legislation.

See **A LONELY** — p. 6

Thinkbit

Window shopping is the art of eye browsing.

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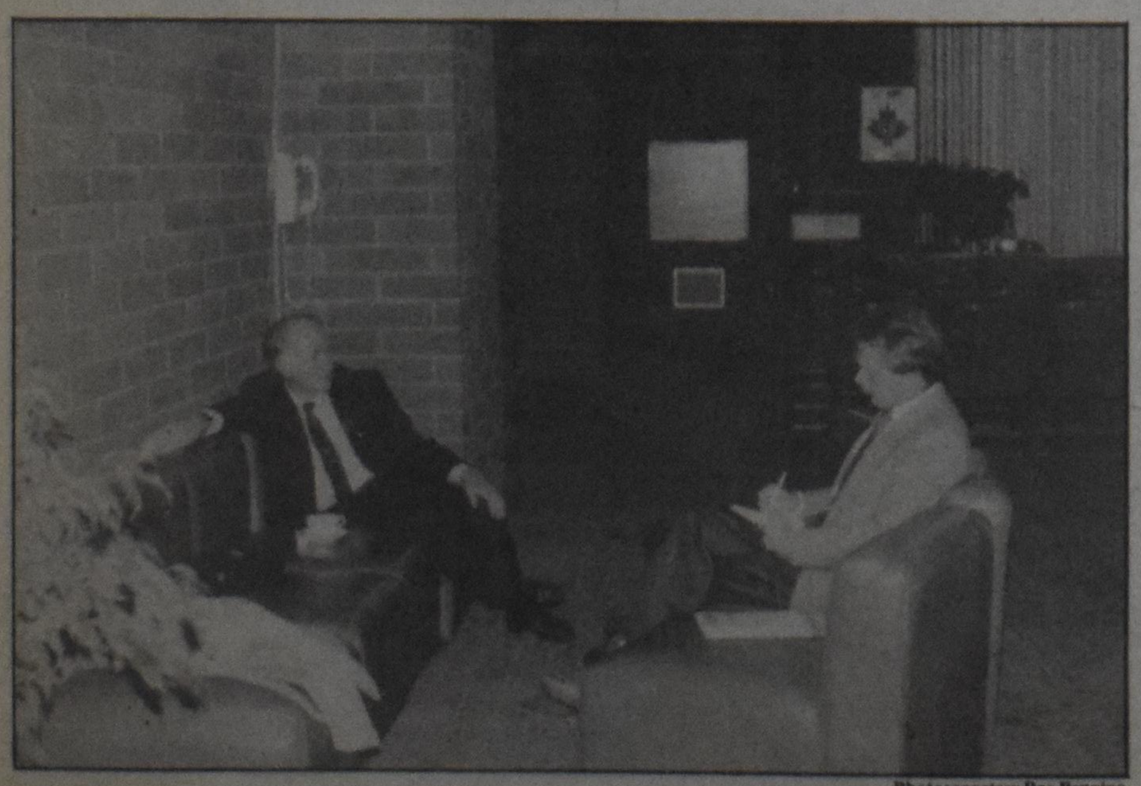


Photo: courtesy Ray Penning

Party leader Ed Vanwoudenberg with member of the Canadian Press.

El Salvador has shattering lessons for North American Christians

Photo: Reuter

Poverty, homelessness and confrontations with death haunt Salvadorans. 75,000 have died in El Salvador's "civil war."

Marian Van Til

TOTTENHAM, Ont. — LeeAnn Purchase, 35, says her friends in Ontario can't seem to appreciate why she went to El Salvador, nor "the pain and the passions that it elicited" in her. But she's anxious for them, and North Americans generally, to understand the situation in that war-torn country and the overwhelming need the civil war there has produced among its people.

Purchase recently returned from a three-week stint in San Salvador, the capital city, to lay groundwork for a Canadian Baptist Youth project. She was also part of a Presbyterian "accompaniment program."

The youth project, jointly sponsored by Canadian Baptists and Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Salvador, involved the building of a Canada/El Salvador house which works in community outreach, literacy training, and as a sanctuary from government troops. The accompaniment program provides "an international presence" — i.e., non Salvadorans — to accompany Salvadorans while they do relief work for their fellow citizens, because up until recently, such a presence made it much more difficult for the army to make people "disappear." (Now, however, the presence of foreigners can sometimes be a liability because the government assumes they are communist inspired.)

Purchase's interest in El Salvador was kindled several years ago when she was commissioned by the Canadian Baptist Federation to write Bible study material related to that country.

Exposure to God's world

"It exposed me to the history [of the situation], the need; I met people from there. It (and a trip to India) was an exposure to God's world. It was shattering," says Purchase. "It became inevitable that I would go there one day." So when the opportunity arose, "it was the consummation of an unrequited love that had grown for two and a half years."

San Salvador's Emmanuel Baptist Church was Purchase's base of operation. The church has 110 baptized members and 118 full-time staff. Most of the members belong to El Salvador's small middle class — they are carpenters, teachers, or professionals in service industries — but have consciously chosen to live modestly so that they can help some of the vast numbers of their fellow citizens who live in the most miserable poverty and in acute danger.

In addition to its worship life, the church runs an orphanage, school, literacy programs (68 per cent of Salvadorans are illiterate), health clinics, agricultural co-ops and food and clothing distribution centres. Those kinds of activities, however, "put one in conflict with the government," notes Purchase. "All those who try to empower the powerless are considered communists."

Emmanuel Baptist church does not take sides in the conflict, but its help of the poor is construed to be taking sides. So, too, with the relief activities of the Catholic Church and the various Protestant churches, the latter whose members make up less than 10 per cent of the population.

Many of those Catholics and Protestants work together, some under an umbrella aid and development group called Diaconia. Diaconia is "communist," according to the government.

Most disconcerting to Purchase was the narrow way in which some of the churches interpret the gospel. They will provide for peoples' "spiritual" needs, but don't want to get involved in what Christ called offering the cup of cold water. "They toe the government line," she says. "They're afraid to get involved." But Purchase cites the truism that it's very difficult to preach to someone who is hungry — or homeless.

See **EL SALVADOR** — p. 2

In this issue:

Two unusual Catholic films, one church-approved, one by a "renegade" . . . . . p. 7
An Albertan evangelizes in Greenland . . . . . pp. 10-11
Paul Marshall analyses our society's view of religion . . . . . p. 12

El Salvador suspects Good Samaritans

... continued from page 1.

Emmanuel church is an exception among El Salvador's 60 Baptist congregations. "It's something of an embarrassment to the others, at the least; at worst, they, too, see it as communist," explains Purchase.

Among Purchase's "communist" activities were evacuating the wounded, taking in refugees, searching for missing church members and bringing food to hard-hit areas. (Three church members who are still in prison — one tortured to the point of not being able to walk — are guilty of nothing more than being a youth group member, a Sunday school teacher, a trade union member).

"A lot of our work was frustrated by military blockades," Purchase says. She and fellow workers "were stopped often" by the army. "It was frightening to have all that hardware waved in your face; it was very intimidating."

Another gut-wrenching experience was the sight of corpses in the street. "That was very painful," says Purchase. "To have to deal with death in that way is something [North Americans] of my generation have never had to do."

The three-week visit was so overwhelming that the articulate Purchase says she has trouble finding the words to describe it. And what it did to strengthen her faith was equally significant. "It was a profound spiritual and theological experience," she admits.

"When you're in that kind of danger all your resources and crutches are removed. When we read the scripture and sang that our utter dependence was on the Lord, I knew that was true in a way I had never experienced it."

Formidable propaganda

One of the most frustrating things about returning to North America is people's mistaken perceptions of the Salvadoran situation, says Purchase. (The other was condemnation for "leaving" her husband and two daughters, aged 13 and 10, for three weeks.)

"Ninety-five per cent of the [Salvadoran] military have been forcibly recruited," Purchase explains. "They are kids who for the first time have clothing, a roof over their heads, food, a job. Along with that the propaganda machine is just formidable. There's a constant, concerted program of indoctrination."

"It's also simply not true that El Salvador has a democratically elected government. Seventy per cent of the people didn't vote — out of fear, or some because of a conscious boycott.

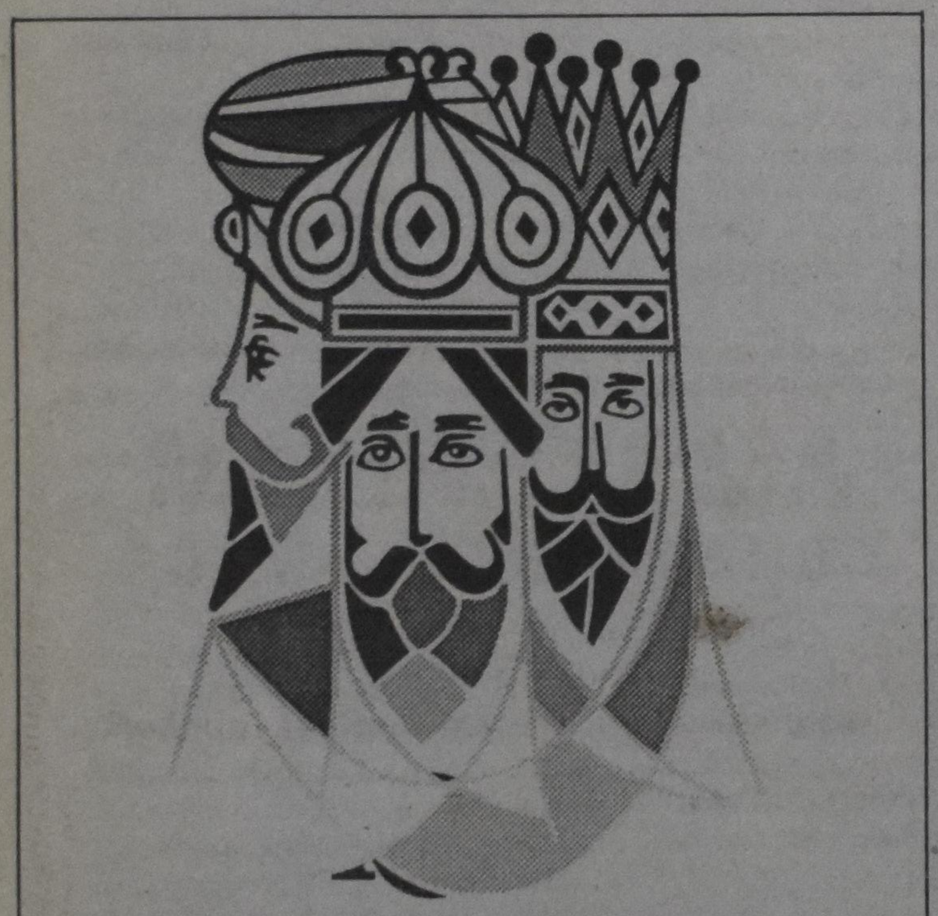
The problem is compounded by the U.S. government's support of the regime, she says. "There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that the real war has to be fought on Pensylvania Avenue," asserts Purchase. "[The U.S.'s support] has always been without any real rationale. A great number of those 75,000 who have died there wouldn't have died if it weren't for that support. They are supporting a regime that is evil through and through. Its perpetuation lies in raising a word like communism, hanging the spectre of communism over everything."

True commitment

Part of the negative reaction Purchase's trip has elicited is because "the message of El Salvador is a very discomfiting one and people don't want to hear it," she believes. "It calls into question our own lifestyles, even our faith."

"If God were to ask me to give all this up tomorrow, I would, people say. Well, God *is* asking us that. I don't mean *we* have to live in poverty, but modestly, being aware of how our lifestyles effect others, [and aware] of the environment.

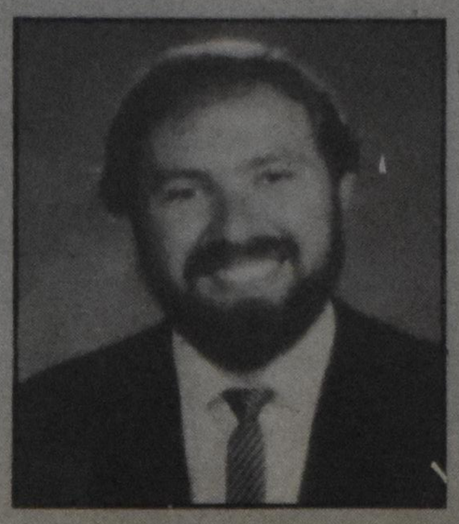
"We need to bring all that we are and have to Christ. People need to know *why* they do what they do," asserts Purchase. The Christians she met in El Salvador have that kind of commitment and awareness. "The gospel I see now has much more integrity than the gospel I knew before," Purchase concludes.



ARISE, SHINE; FOR THY LIGHT IS COME, AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON THEE. FOR BEHOLD, THE DARKNESS SHALL COVER THE EARTH, AND GROSS DARKNESS THE PEOPLE: BUT THE LORD SHALL ARISE UPON THEE, AND HIS GLORY SHALL BE SEEN UPON THEE. AND THE GENTILES SHALL COME TO THY LIGHT, AND KINGS TO THE BRIGHTNESS OF THY RISING. ISAIAH 60 VS.1-3

BETWEEN THE LINES

Socio-political comment by Syd Hielema, Clarence Joldersma, Jake Kuiken, Jim Romahn



The killer greenhouse strikes again

Imagine the scene! A giant greenhouse suddenly comes alive and goes on a rampage by enclosing and suffocating thousands of innocent people. As it stalks across the land its fury increases and it begins to bake all people, beasts and plants in its path. Imagine the large headlines: "Killer greenhouse strikes again!" Imagine the panic, concern and radical action that this killer would create.

Of course, second rate science fiction like this borders on the ludicrous. Greenhouses are for growing, not for killing; they are controlled, not controlling; they are life-giving, not life-taking.

All these thoughts flashed through my mind when, in a recent *Globe and Mail*, I read the front page headline: "Greenhouse effect blamed for deaths of one million in Third World last year." Was the *Globe and Mail* becoming sensational just to compete with the *Sun* for morning readers?

The "alarmist" they quoted turned out to be 85-year-old Rene Dumont, a professor since 1933 at the reputable National Agronomy Institute in Paris. Dumont, no "fly-by-night" sensationalist, pulled no punches about the solid link between our (First World) energy consumption, the greenhouse effect, and Third World deaths attributable to drought-caused starvation.

This "greenhouse" headline also caught my eye because of a recent seminar that I attended at a Christian teacher's convention. Henk Hengeveld of Environment Canada presented much of his impressive research on the greenhouse effect. What stuck with me were the changes in perception that pollution research has caused over the last number of years.

We're all in the sinking ship

At first, most pollution was thought to be local (e.g., PCBs in Smithville drinking water, mercury in the English-Wabagoon River system); then it was realized that more serious problems were actually regional (e.g., Ohio valley coal burning causes acid rain in northeastern Ontario and Quebec); now focus has shifted to global problems (e.g., ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect). This shift from local, to regional, to global shows that we are finally sophisticated enough to uncover problems that threaten the biosphere, that small envelope of the earth's atmosphere that is capable of sustaining life in its varied forms. Hengeveld carefully explained that the changes we are creating with the greenhouse effect are happening much faster than we as human beings can adapt to them, and that major problems will occur in the future (if they aren't occurring already) because of the swiftness of these changes.

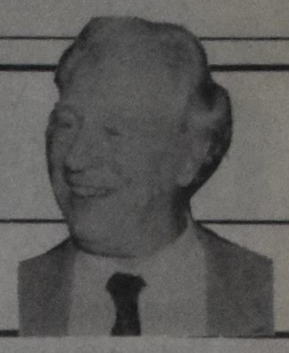
Both Hengeveld and Dumont present a consistent message. As a world (and especially as a First World), we are on the road to creating an environment that is too hot to handle. Our lifestyles are collectively suicidal; we are creating an environment which will ultimately kill (many of) us human beings on this globe. Both Hengeveld and Dumont each in his own way, speak as the prophets of old: change your ways or you will be destroyed.

The most interesting part of the *Globe and Mail* article was the lifestyle change Dumont proposed. With all the militant rhetoric, I expected unrealistic and impossible suggestions. However, Dumont's suggestions were surprisingly within reach: to fund alternative energy research, put a 17-cent tax on each litre of fuel sold; ban all cars that use more than 5.5 litres per 100 km; penalize people who put up Christmas lights; promote bicycles and rickshaws instead of cars in the Third World. Underlying these suggestions (and others could be added) are the ideas that our wasteful energy habits are immoral, that they contribute to other people's deaths, that they can be changed, and that small changes do make a significant difference.

These two people, Dumont and Hengeveld, made me re-think and evaluate my energy using habits. They forced me to confront the (im)morality of my middle-class energy lifestyle. And they forced me to make some change in my energy using patterns. I don't want to breathe life into the "Killer Greenhouse."

Clarence Joldersma teaches science at Smithville District Christian High School, Smithville, Ont.

Pressreview



Carl D. Tuyl

If you think the life of a Canadian prime minister is easy, you are sorely mistaken. Monsieur flew to Brussels and back to Ottawa within 48 hours. He attended the NATO meeting where President Bush briefed the allies on his meeting with Gorbachev.

★★★★

Broadbent passed the crimson mantle of socialist leadership to Yukon Audrey. The NDP is, however, suffering from an acute poast-convention attack of righteousness. Members, mostly those who backed the wrong person, accuse Simon de Jong of offering his support for sale. Come on, comrades, get off your high horse; what else is a party leadership convention if not an occasion to jockey for position. The sons of Mrs. Zebedee did it already ages ago.

★★★★

The Liberals, whose leadership razzmatazz is scheduled for later this year, had scouts at the Winnipeg convention. They learned a lot. They saw the NDP's elite work the floor and the suites for the preferred, polite, party-line candidate, but they also saw quite visibly displayed, (and the world saw it, too) all the inner divisions and contradictions of the party. The Liberal candidates will receive extensive reports.

★★★★

Ah the pain! The Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security (whoever they are) conducted an opinion poll which inquired about the trustworthiness of six world leaders. And who came in dead last? You guessed it! Monsieur! To top it off, the *Toronto Star* revealed the real cost of minister's mileage. They don't take the old family Honda, but fly the government's Challenger 144 aircraft at a cost of close to $5,500 an hour, and in doing so they ran up a tab of $2 million in a period of three months.

★★★★

There's good news, too. *Pravda* held us up to the world as examples of civility. Said the paper: "All disputes on ethnic problems in Canada are handled in a polite way." Ahum!

★★★★

Monsieur sent Senator Lowell Murray on a Meech Lake rescue mission. In Manitoba, Murray received the silent treatment from premier Gary Filmon who gave the "busy signal." Not very friendly, not very conciliatory, not very nice, and not hospitable. The premier could at least have lifted a glass with the senator. Whatever happened to this federal-provincial love-in which Monsieur promised us?

★★★★

The Canadian dollar climbed to dizzying heights when it registered 86.02 cents U.S. That value is not bringing our exporters a whole lot of new business. Our high rate of interest was mainly responsible for the steady rise of the dollar. The Bank of Canada maintains that interest rate for fear of inflation. Inflation, however, was down, and the high cost of money is shifting our economy in the put-put gear.

★★★★

The Alberta provincial government is getting quite a bit of press in connection with its efforts to increase the province's pulp industry. The government has given away timber rights for 221,000 square kilometres to pulp companies. Those are the people who spew dioxin into our rivers and lakes. The Pope took time out from his birth control and gender pre-occupation to announce that the bottom line of pollution was greed and selfishness. Nicely put!

★★★★

Ontario's Premier Peterson got into the Christmas spirit with an order that no Christmas party could be funded out of any ministry's budget. Scrooge!

★★★★

Sign of the times: When journalists pointed out to Romanian defector Nadia Comaneci that the man with whom she was romantically involved was married and had a family, she answered, "So what?"

★★★★

How the mighty have fallen! East German Communist Party chiefs are under house arrest for corruption charges. TV showed the pantries of the privileged stocked with sufficient gourmet provisions to feed the poor of a small country. It made the closets at 24 Sussex look like the display of a Salvation Army second-hand store.

★★★★

Western leaders judged the economic capacities of Gorbachev. Their verdicts were not very flattering. The Soviet consumers, next to Dave Barret's NDP-ers, must rank among the most frustrated people in the world. Monsieur himself gave the Soviet leader quite a devastating report card for economics, but then again there are certain voices in Canada who would not count Monsieur among the economic wizards of his time, either.

★★★★

Kohl's tentative plans for a re-united Germany were not met with a lot of approval in Europe. The sound of rolling Panzers is still too fresh in the mind of people of my age. The Soviets were especially vocal in their criticism. Foreign Minister Shevardnadze said that Kohl's plan would increase the turmoil in Central Europe. We have enough on our plate right now, is what he meant.

★★★★

Romania is the only hard-line communist state left. The country sits in Central Europe like a lonely old broken stump of a tooth on a gum that is being prepared for dentures.

★★★★

Philippine President Corazon Aquino does not seem to be able to keep the cork on the large bottle of discontent in her country. She needed U.S. Air Force assistance to suppress another revolt. The U.S. has large military facilities in the Philippines, but Bush might seek for alternate locations. Withdrawal of the U.S. bases will further damage the already very shaky Philippine economy. Aquino's term expires in 1992, but there is considerable doubt that she will hang on to power until then.

★★★★

The Dutch were the first foreign landowners in Manhattan when they bought land from the Indians for a load of trinkets and $24. There is a lot of choice Manhattan property in foreign ownership today. And who owns the most? I know, you guessed the Japanese, but you are mistaken. The Canadians are the largest foreign owners of Manhattan real estate; and the Dutch, — yes, the Dutch! — are tied with the Japanese as the biggest investors in the U.S. overall.

★★★★

You know, of course, how the cost of medical care has soared. Well, there was this gentleman (in traditional stories he was a Scottish Presbyterian, but I am against ethnic jokes) who managed to cut a few expenses. He appeared at his family physician with a rather large bottle of specimen. The doctor told him to come back in a week, which he did. At that next visit the doctor had received the laboratory report and told the gentleman that everything was OK. The man requested the use of the telephone and called his wife. "Dear," he said, "We are all healthy and in good shape — you, the children, Grandpa and myself."

Carl Tuyl is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kingston, Ont.

Report on Sexual Abuse

"To admit that the terrible evil of sexual abuse exists within the churches is hard. But we must acknowledge it, for only then can we deal with the fear, hurt and shame."

A report prepared by the Advisory Committee on Sexual Abuse appointed by Classis Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church, adopted on May 17, 1989.

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Are riches given to alleviate poverty?

Editorial

Most of us do not think much *about* poverty, because we do not think much *of* it. It's amazing how easy it is to pretend that there is no poverty. We can walk, drive to work, go to church, attend choir practice, lead a committee meeting, watch our son play hockey, go shopping, visit friends and never see any evidence of poverty.

Poverty is something you have to seek out if you live in a nice suburb or small town in North America. It thrives mostly in big cities and far-away countries. Once in a while you do read in the daily paper that foodbanks have not solved the problem of hunger in Canadian cities and that children make up most of the recipients of free food. Ethiopia seems to be headed for another catastrophe if drought and war continue. Things don't look that good for Bangladesh.

Poverty seems such a difficult problem to tackle, too. It's either not visible or it is abundantly visible. When it *is* visible, it is present in such unmanageable lumps.

Yet, there are things we can and should do. We can put money together as churches and provide international food aid. We can offer volunteer services in our cities. But even in our smaller towns there is more poverty than we will see with a superficial glance or a mind preoccupied with other matters. Like anything else, if you want to find poverty, you will. The problem with many of us is that we do not want to find it. We don't like being reminded of poverty anymore than we want to hear someone tell us that she is not fine after we casually said (not asked), "How are you?"

The estate of poverty

When it comes to poverty, it's easy for us Christians to be status quo people. Maybe that's because of our idea that God is in charge of all things, and all's well with the world. Maybe it's because we think that there must be good reasons for someone's poverty. Poor people probably deserve to be poor. The quality of acquiescence is in our blood. It's in our past. It's even in a hymn of our past.

"All things bright and beautiful" is a hymn that celebrates God's act of creation. "Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings ..., the purpleheaded mountain, the river running by ...; the cold wind in the winter, the pleasant summer sun ..., he made them every one." It's a happy song that lifts our hearts from admiring the beauty of nature to adoring the great God Creator.

Little do we realize today that this hymn has been purified in the course of years from a stanza that praised God for poverty. More than 30 years ago the hymn still included the lines: "The rich man in his castle, / The poor man at his gate, / God made them, high or lowly, / And ordered their estate." The stanza reflects a social vision that very few Christians openly dare to hold today.

Few of us would want to sing with all our heart that God ordered a system that puts rich people in their castles and the poor at their gates. "Thank God the church dropped that stanza from 'All things bright and beautiful,' " we might say. Who can imagine a rich person driving his or her Lamborghini to the doors of Scott Mission in Toronto, rolling down the window and singing to the people in the food line-up: "All things bright and beautiful, your drugs, your alcohol, your garbage, cold and hunger, the Lord God made it all"? It isn't really true that God ordained that some people be rich and others poor, is it?

God humbles and exalts

It all depends what we mean by *ordain*. We should reject the notion of ordination if it means approval, if it goes somewhat like this: "The way things are with us and others, that's the way it's supposed to be. God likes variety in human life: rich and poor, tall and short, young and old, male and female." It would serve the cause of the rich very well to think that God likes an unequal distribution of goods: "Some people can handle wealth so much better than others. Our workers don't need as much money as we do." This is a dangerous philosophy that almost always results in injustice. There is usually a kernel of truth in it. Indeed, some people don't know how to handle wealth. But a lot of rich people don't either.

But there is a way of saying that God does ordain wealth and poverty. In I Samuel 2, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, dedicates her son to the Lord, after he heard her prayer that she might have a child. In this prayer of dedication Hannah praises God, saying that "there is no Rock like our God .... The Lord brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up." And then she adds: "The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts." What are we to make of that?

First of all, we have to read on a bit. Hannah continues: "He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne." In other words, there is nothing frozen about the condition of poverty as far as the Lord is concerned. In fact, he does not want to keep people poor as part of a grand design. When he does send poverty or wealth, he does it to punish or to show mercy. According to Proverbs 11:24, a person who gives freely gains even more, but someone who withholds unduly comes to poverty. There is also the idea that hard work brings profit (Prov. 14:23). God does, indeed, send wealth and poverty. But he also allows crooks to get rich, in a narrow sort of way. They are never really rich, of course, but he lets them run on a leash of plenty of cash and power.

But the outstanding character of God regarding the poor is that he always *wants* to make them rich. God cannot stand to see people without the things they need. In fact, the Apostle Paul tells the Corinthians that Jesus, reflecting God's concern for people's welfare, "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9).

Becoming poor

And that is to be the attitude again of those Jesus makes rich. We're not just talking money here, of course; though food, clothing and shelter is certainly included in the riches of God's mercy. Our attitude should always be to make others rich. That requires of us a willingness to become poor, first of all poor in spirit. But would that not translate into some form of material poverty as well, so that we end up being less rich than we could be? How many of us who are rich by most standards dare to pray the prayer: "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread"? (Prov. 30:8).

What is a rich person who drives a Lamborghini to do? Even without the song about the rich man in his castle, his or her car driving past Scott Mission or anywhere else for that matter expresses the same sentiment. Can the owner of a car that costs as much as a house in Toronto ($250,000.00) really express God's love for the poor? Because of the complexity of human living we have to allow for the possibility. It *is* possible for rich people to be poor in spirit, and thus to enrich others spiritually, emotionally and materially. But it's not likely, unless needles' eyes are a lot bigger these days than they used to be.

I know a woman whose father, a butcher, went bankrupt in Holland during World War II because he was too generous handing out meat during a time when food was extremely scarce. He and his wife were protected by a loving God from becoming too rich and too poor. They and their 11 children always enjoyed their daily bread.

What is *your* attitude towards riches and poverty? Are you thanking God for the way things are, or are you asking him to help us make things more equitable?

BW

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS

Traditions

Saturday night is pizza night at our house. This has been the tradition since our children were weaned from milk and pablum diets to heartier dig-in-with-the-fingers' feasts. It was established as a tradition when it became clear that all members of the family enjoyed participating in preparing and consuming pizzas. It is a tradition I now particularly enjoy because it relieves the adults in the house from having to conjure up wholesome, enticing, and original meals when faced with the daily dilemma of: "What's to be served for dinner?" The Saturday pizza tradition is a mindless fact of living in the Oosterhuis' household that is enjoyed by all.

Mindless traditions abound in households where things are accepted as givens because "they have always been done that way." Such traditions, which often began because of someone's stated preference, eventually become immovable household laws. My father, who loved *boterkoek* encouraged my mother to bake it every week for Sunday coffee events. And so every Saturday the smell of freshly baked buttercake permeated the family kitchen.

As the family grew up and lunches were enriched with buttercake treats, the baking smell was also present in midweek. When our stepmother arrived on the scene, she was instructed in the fine art of buttercake baking and she too ensured that it was always available as a coffee treat. By the time I had consumed buttercake every day for more than 10 years, the thought of eating another piece began to "stick in my craw" and I frequently declined the opportunity. Undaunted, my stepmother continued her baking tradition, and even long after Dad was gone, she continued to bake the traditional family "treat."

December is a month that is filled with traditions, many of them not quite as mindless as the preparation of pizza or buttercake. With our children we have established a number of family traditions: lighting candles and singing carols every evening from Dec. 1-30; celebrating an eight-day Christmas week with banners, festivities, and presents; trimming the tree with new and old mementos; creating and eating a gingerbread house; caroling in the neighbourhood with friends and/or students. Each of these traditions was developed in past years as a result of our reflections and attempts to highlight the importance of Christ's birth in our lives. We have similar traditions at Easter time to underscore Christ's sacrifice and resurrection.

But even these very significant, mindful traditions can become mindless activities when they are imposed as givens "because they have always been done that way in this family." Traditions need to be constantly revitalized, reaffirmed, and personally adopted as meaningful to draw a family together in joyful celebration. When tradition begins to "stick in the craw" of a family member, it is definitely time for the family to sit down and ask, as the children in the Jewish Seder ritually, ask: "Why is it that this night, of all nights, is so different? On other nights we eat leavened bread ..." The answers and actions of the parents subsequently describe the historical pilgrimage and meaning of the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, the fresh greens, the three glasses of wine.

Maybe if my father, in response to my buttercake revolt would have said, "In the old country we had no oven and butter was a very expensive commodity; for us, buttercake represents the enriched new life and opportunities that Canada is offering us," eating buttercake would have become a daily activity of gratitude.

It is, of course, difficult to imbue all our traditions with such significance. Pizza night thrives as a night of convenience, minimal thought, and family involvement in the creation of dinner. But the traditions we hold dear because of their religious significance should never become the mindless rituals that govern our daily actions.

"Why do we light the candles again this December evening?"

"Because we are reliving the eager anticipation of the birth of Christ; the gift of God's love and faithfulness in lives that groan for deliverance."

Alyce Horzelenberg-Oosterhuis is assistant professor of educational psychology at The King's College, Edmonton.

Letters

Pleads for co-operative effort in Christian education

Thank you so much for your concise and honest evaluation of the differences between the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) position and that of the Canadian Council of Christian Reformed Churches on the issue of religion in the public schools.

As a parent of children attending an OACS school and as a teacher, teaching in an OACS school, I was offended when Adrian Guldemond, speaking on my behalf, took such an adversarial tone in both his *Communicator* editorial and in the two articles he wrote for *Calvinist Contact*.

As a result of my difficulties, I have written both to the OACS board and to Adrian himself.

In all the years that I have been involved in Christian education, whether as teacher, parent, boardmember, Education Committee chairperson, OACS and OAAIS board or staff representative, I think we would have gotten a lot further with Christian education within the Canadian framework if we as boards, individual supporter, parent or teacher would do our own homework on what is really going on within our own schools and within the larger framework of both Christian and public education. Then standing together on the firm foundation that unites us, rather than spending our time in fighting about our differences we could really get somewhere in lighting up the surrounding darkness.

Thanks again, Robert, for fairly clarifying the issue, particularly for those who don't have the opportunity to fully hear any other opinion but that of the OACS as outlined by Adrian Guldemond.

Thea De Groot
Sarnia, Ont.

Update on the Ghabras

In the November 10 issue of *Calvinist Contact* we printed an editorial on the desperate situation of the Khalil Al-Ghabra family in West Germany. As you may remember, the family fled Syria four-and-a-half years ago because they were persecuted for their faith. We urged readers to write to the Honourable Barbara McDougall, explaining to her that because of the law of apostasy and because of reports that relatives have vowed to kill them, these people should be considered genuine refugees.

Judging by copies of letters to Barbara McDougall, which were passed on to us, many readers have taken up the challenge. Mr. Peter Zwart, who met with an assistant to the minister a few weeks ago, was told that, indeed, quite a few letters had been received. They certainly knew about the Ghabra family. Mr. Zwart hopes to meet with Ms. McDougall in January to further pursue the matter.

In the meantime, the Ghabras, because we are working on their situation here in Canada, are safe for the time being. West Germany won't deport the family as long as there is a possibility that Canada will accept them.

If you still haven't written to the Minister, it's not too late. In fact, it's good to keep the issue warm between now and the January meeting. The address of the minister is: The Honourable Barbara McDougall, Minister of Employment and Immigration, Ottawa, Canada, K1A 0J9. No postage is required.

Editor

Reader participation

Enclosed [in the letter we received] is a copy of the letter sent to Ms. McDougall about the Ghabra family. Another plus point for *Calvinist Contact*.

We have thoroughly enjoyed most editorials. They are thought-provoking, current and so down to earth as far as language is concerned.

Keep the ethnic and Christian perspective but also try to enter the mainstream of Canadian society with your choice of articles and appearance of C.C.

We wish you and the staff a blessed Christmas and 1990.

Harmen Boersma
Kemptville, Ont.

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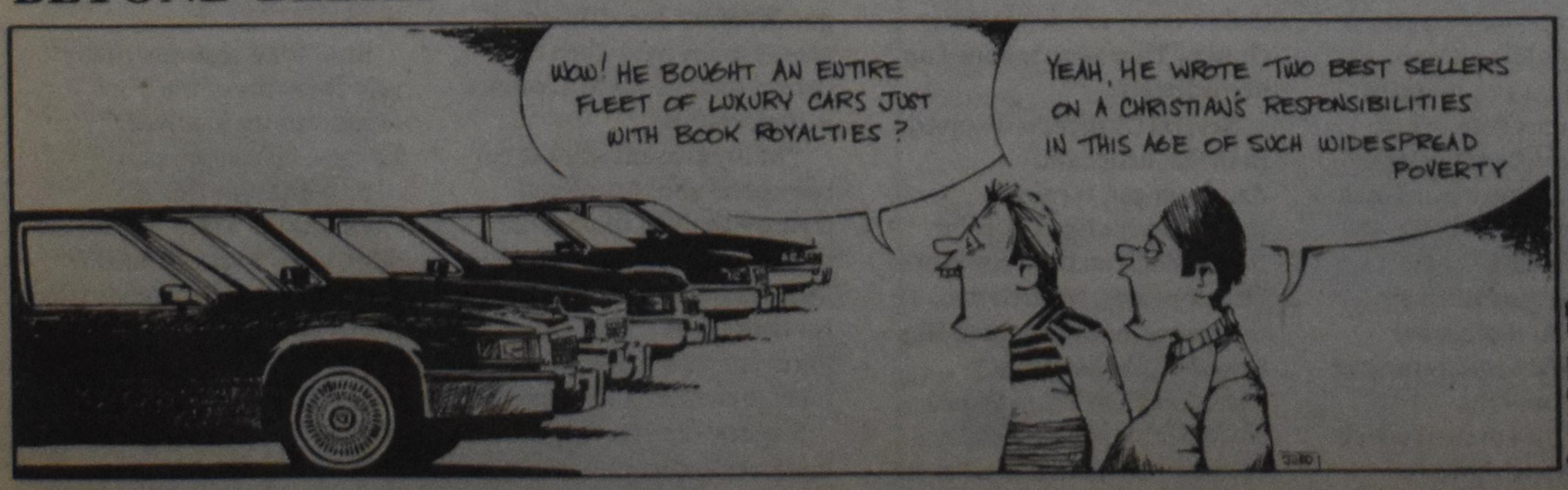
WOW! HE BOUGHT AN ENTIRE FLEET OF LUXURY CARS JUST WITH BOOK ROYALTIES?
YEAH, HE WROTE TWO BEST SELLERS ON A CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS AGE OF SUCH WIDESPREAD POVERTY

News

A lonely business

... continued from page 1.

Speakers stressed that principles rather than electoral success are the party's most important contribution to the political process.

"We are called to be prophets, and prophecy is a lonely business," said party president Bill Stilwell in his opening address.

"We must not be afraid to speak the uncompromising truth. We may be attacked and vilified and humiliated, but we must persevere in doing it God's way. We must never do it man's way."

He criticized the Reform Party, which has attracted many people from the same conservative Christian constituency, as unprincipled for promising to take direction from referendums and polls.

Vane said Christians find it impossible to maintain their principles in existing parties.

"The only way Christians can meaningfully impact major parties is by constant compromise, more compromise and more compromise."

Moral stands

In voting on specific resolutions, the party called for jail terms for abortionists, rejecting Stilwell's call for the death penalty. Comparing abortion to murder, Stilwell said the penalty should be the same.

It supported social programs which encourage people to work, citing the Bible's command for humanity to take dominion over the earth as evidence that work and responsible free enterprise were assigned to humanity at the time of creation.

Delegates also supported a resolution promoting moral leadership and dialogue in the fight against apartheid, opposing economic sanctions. Vanwoudenberg said at a press conference that the South African government was dismantling apartheid "as fast as they can."

Women and family

Vanwoudenberg's comment during the press conference that women should not serve in combat roles, such as fighter pilots, because the extraordinary gravitational forces could affect her ability to bear children.

A woman's physiology and her ability to bear children are her "fulfilment," Vanwoudenberg said.

Looking to the future, Vane urged greater party unity, recognition of past mistakes, and development of the party's identity as "pro family."

In developing an image which will attract voters outside the Christian community, the party should be recognized by the public primarily for "championing the cause of the traditional family and wholesome values," Vane said.

In an interview after the convention, Vanwoudenberg said the convention indicated how much the party has matured in only a few years. Policy initiatives in 12 areas — taxation, environment, the sanctity of life, parliamentary reform, electoral reform, bilingualism, Native issues, defense, Senate reform, agriculture, justice and a balanced budget — are being circulated among local groups and should give the party a strong platform for the next federal election, expected in 1992.

The party also emerged from the convention with a more national scope. Once dominated by people from British Columbia, where the party started, the national board now contains members from Ontario and other provinces. The new party president is from Ontario as well.

"We have a better grasp of the issues," Vanwoudenberg said. In 1986 the party's prime concern was getting the 50 candidates it needed to be registered as a federal party. For the future, the party's priority will be refining its policies and developing more public visibility.

Vanwoudenberg said it has been encouraged by the interest shown in the party.

"People are looking for answers that they feel their old party isn't providing any more."

This was Anne in May 1942, age 13. She received a diary for her birthday and started writing in it one day later, June 14.

Anne Frank exhibit visits Toronto on world tour

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Anne Frank would have been 60 this year. But she died at age 16 in Bergen-Belsen.

Toronto Mayor Art Eggleton declared November 2 to be "Anne Frank Day." The previous day he and Amsterdam mayor Ed van Thijn officially opened the exhibit "Anne Frank in the World: 1929-1945."

The killing of the Frank family — all except father Otto, who died at age 91 — is a symbol to the world of the Nazi Holocaust. Anne's diary, written in captivity, captured the heart of the world. The house in Amsterdam where her family and four other people hid for more than two years has become an international lightning rod. No one can visit it without being deeply moved.

The exhibit at Ontario Place shows over 800 photos and documents from the Frank family experience. It is one of seven identical exhibits travelling the world in the past two years, now for the first time in Canada. It includes some actual pages from Anne's diary and a small-scale model of the house where she and her family hid.

Mr. Frank was a German merchant living in Frankfurt when Hitler's Nazis began persecuting Jews. When Anne was four years old her father moved the family from Germany to Amsterdam because of the Dutch tradition of neutrality and good treatment of its Jews. But when Anne's older sister Margot received deportation orders from the Nazis in 1942, the family went into hiding. On August 4, 1944, the Nazis discovered their whereabouts.

Twenty thousand people have seen the exhibit in Toronto. Some 15,000 of these were school children, given an hour-and-a-half tour by volunteer guides. Visitors see a video made in the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, and meet with a concentration camp survivor who tells his or her story.

The first panel in the exhibit asks, "If Anne Frank had lived next door to us, could she have counted on us for help?"

Anne wrote in her diary in 1944, "In spite of everything, I still believe that people are good at heart."

'Just Christmas' benefits Third World poor

Paul De Groot

EDMONTON — Every bargain-hunter back from the Third World asks the same question. What would happen if those wonderful crafts could be sold in Canada?

Canadians could help the Third World simply by purchasing attractive items. The problem is the middleman. How much of the purchase price actually makes it back to the artisan?

Beth Lange-Christensen asked that question on a Lutheran Church-sponsored trip to Peru. She and others with the same experience decided to do something about it.

The result is "Just Christmas," an unusual arts and crafts sale held in Edmonton each November. This year's sale, held recently at Knox-Metropolitan Church, was the fifth year that development groups, immigrant aid societies and ethnic associations have joined forces to sell crafts from the Third World.

The sale, in which most items are sold at cost, achieves three goals, Lange-Christensen says.

• It provides employment. Many of the artisans live in remote areas where there are few opportunities to earn cash which can improve their standard of living.

• It encourages groups to maintain their traditional crafts. "In Peru, many people had stopped making traditional Inca designs which had been passed down for centuries," Lange-Christensen said.

• It opens a market for goods which their local economy is not large enough or wealthy enough to support.

Lange-Christensen realized the potential of the idea when she tried selling about $200 worth of Peruvian tapestries and sweaters to friends at her church. They were snapped up immediately.

Several Christians involved in social justice and development, through organizations like Tools for Peace, and Ten Days for World Development, realized that there were many groups trying to make links between Canadians and Third World craftspeople. They organized the first Just Christmas around that concept. Today, about two dozen groups from Latin America, Africa and Asia buy booths at Just Christmas.

Major groups such as Oxfam and the Canadian Hunger Foundation are represented. So are small immigrant associations.

The artisans who make the goods sold at Just Christmas are normally paid when they deliver their goods to a contact in their country.

"Many artisans work in co-operatives and they already have a way to establish a fair price. But many only charge for the materials they use and not for their labour. Our contact in Peru, for instance, encourages them to charge a fair price."

Since no duty is charged on hand-crafted work of this type and the goods are sold only for the original cost and shipping, prices tend to be low, Lange-Christensen said.

It's hard to say how many Edmontonians patronize the sale each year but in recent years 600-800 names have appeared in the guest book. Many others don't sign the book.

But "it's a big event of the year for many of the organizations involved," Lange-Christensen said.

As with many things involving the Third World, the sale has its own rules and it's difficult to predict exactly what will be on sale, she notes.

"Sometimes the supply is irregular. If there's a civil war, getting the goods out is erratic."

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Romero

Rated AA
Stars Raul Julia, Richard Jordan, Ana Alicia, Harold Gould, Eddie Valdez
Directed by John Duigan

Romero makes history seem to repeat itself: it depicts the context of events which led to the murder of Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar Romero (and several parish priests before him) on March 25, 1980, by right-wing death squads in El Salvador.

This is not a film which leaves one comfortable; it's not "entertainment" — which (along with politics) is why Hollywood wouldn't touch it. But its makers, who included Catholic priests and lay people in the U.S., were zealous about the story they felt compelled to tell, so they shunned Hollywood and convinced the church itself — specifically the Paulist Fathers — to produce it.

That's not to say that *Romero* is low-budget and badly acted, however. It was relatively low-budget by Hollywood standards, but badly acted it's not. In fact, Raul Julia, an esteemed actor best known opposite William Hurt in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, gives the performance of his career while working at a fraction of his normal salary. And the other actors support him well.

Unlikely martyr

Oscar Romero did not fit the martyr stereotype. He was not physically robust nor personally aggressive. He was a scholar; a quiet and rather conservative academic who, in the largely administrative positions he held in the Salvadoran church, rubbed shoulders with wealthy government officials and the landed gentry.

He was chosen archbishop by Rome precisely because he would be a stabilizing force, a kind of buffer between the most radical parish priests and the government.

But Romero took the gospel seriously, and once he had become archbishop began to mingle with the peasants who were the Church. As he saw more and more of the stark contrast between the poverty-ensconced peasants and the Salvadoran establishment, he began to understand why some of his priests had become so politically activated. He came to be much loved by the people: he pastored them courageously while demanding that the army not interfere with worship and other activities of the church.

Romero became a thorn in the side of the government/military (and, to some extent, to the church hierarchy as well) when he begins to sympathize with the people.

Romero's concern is that the church do its task: preach the gospel. But the gospel has political implications, his priests-in-the-trenches tell him. No argument there — from Romero or from any Reformed viewers. But as Romero becomes sensitized to the pressing needs of the people, the movie seems not to know quite how to present a genuine gospel which is *socially*, not just personally relevant. So it moves toward equating any courageous solidarity with the poor and oppressed with the gospel of Christ. Romero (from what I have read about the man) likely did not have that view. He recognized that the gospel always has implications for both the rich and the poor (the movie does bring that out somewhat). But the film seems to make him a martyr in the cause of social justice, while Romero knew he might die — seeking justice, yes — but in Christ's name.

Despite that ambiguity about the gospel's relation to a wartorn society (does it stem from a dichotomous nature/grace worldview?), this is a significant and emotionally powerful film. It's good to know that when Christians deem a message important they will buck Hollywood to get it across, and do it in a way that has both artistic and moral integrity.

Romero is an excellent film for discussion among parents and teenagers, church and high school groups or among friends, not only for the questions it will raise regarding our responsibility to Christians in the Third World, but for making us contemplate the cost of *our* discipleship.

Jesus of Montreal

Stars Lothaire Bluteau, Catherine Wilkening, Johanne-Marie Tremblay
Directed by Denys Arcand

Despite its rather disconcerting title, *Jesus of Montreal* should be given a critical look. A French Canadian film, it was acclaimed at last summer's Cannes Festival; that festival is a kind of barometer by which some of the better films from around the world are judged.

Arcand's film involves a young actor named Daniel Coloumbe who is asked to play Jesus in a traditional Holy Week Passion play at a well-known Montreal shrine. Coloumbe is supposed to revitalize the 35-year-old play: attendance has fallen off and the current actors aren't much interested.

So Coloumbe gathers three other actors around him (a man and two women) and they revamp the play — drastically. As they start to perform it, their lives are changed by the encounter. In an uncanny way, incidents in Coloumbe's life begin to parallel events in the life of Christ.

One of the women, who capitalized on her sex appeal rather than her acting talents before she became involved with the Passion play, goes back to her old haunts to audition for one last commercial. When she is exploited by the director and his clients, Coloumbe reacts in moral indignation, chasing the men from the theatre. The scene becomes a kind of modern day temple cleansing.

The new version of the Passion play is hailed by critics and Coloumbe is talked about on television; a scene on the top floor of a highrise office building, during which Coloumbe rejects a lawyer's advice on ways in which he could capitalize on his local fame and get rich (compromising his integrity in the process), is meant to evoke the devil tempting Christ on the temple pinnacle by offering all the world's kingdoms.

While the play is being performed (during the crucifixion scene) Daniel is arrested for destroying cameras and other equipment at the commercial audition. In court he rejects a lawyer's help, standing in his own defense. He quietly acknowledges the charges against him.

In the process of performing the new play, Coloumbe and his friends provoke the displeasure of the church establishment. That establishment is represented by the outwardly devout but covertly immoral and spineless priest who is the shrine's caretaker.

Afflicting the comfortable

The church fathers (mostly correctly from our perspective) consider the new Passion play to be unorthodox. It is somewhat ambiguous about Jesus' divinity and relies as much or more on historical records and archeological finds for its information than on the scriptural accounts. But these churchmen are also far too concerned with their own reputations and comfort, and Christ's words quoted from the Sermon on the Mount cut through their pomposity like a two-edged sword, discomfiting them — and making them retaliate against Coloumbe and his friends.

In the end, Coloumbe pays the ultimate price for his integrity: death. At the same time, two others are given new life via transplants of his heart and corneas.

Why would Arcand make such a film? One doesn't choose this subject as if it were just any old story (however "dramatic"), unmindful of its implications.

A possible answer may be found by looking at Quebec society. One cannot think of French Canadian society without considering the impact and place of Christianity. Right from the start, the Catholic Church was an integral part of people's personal lives, social gatherings, schools, political attitudes. It permeated everything.

But no more. Secularization has been swift and thorough. The younger generations have mostly rejected their parents' modes of religion, the church's authority, and the claims of the gospel on their lives. Many are now realizing, however (in Quebec as in other parts of the world), that such rejection has left a spiritual and moral void. And thoughtful people are not comfortable with that void.

New religiosity

Jesus of Montreal seems to be an attempt (consciously or not) at a new kind of religiosity, an endeavour to fill that void by examining one's religious roots. The cast of characters, so to speak, is the same; but the message is a revision which will fit the mindset of secular, late-20th century urban humanity. Arcand may also be saying that where traditional religion has failed, art — and artists guided by principle — may take its place.

Arcand is concerned above all with moral integrity and he indicts the church for having lost it. What good is believing the right thing without doing it? What good is theological orthodoxy without honesty and compassion in daily life?

We may not accept Arcand's answers; but we should follow his lead in asking the questions, because they are crucial for us and our churches if we expect to be individual and communal witnesses to a disintegrating world.

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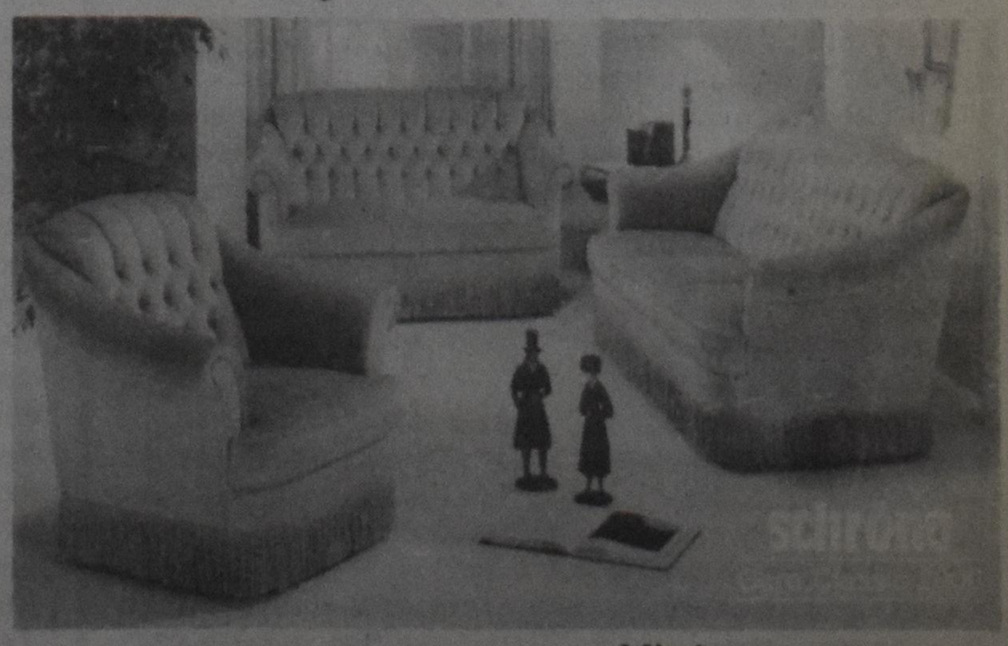

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

New Vatican fidelity oath too binding, say Canadian bishops

Paul De Groot

OTTAWA — A new fidelity oath for Catholic leaders, pastors and teachers is too vague say Canadian bishops.

The new oath, implemented last spring, fails to distinguish between teachings that belong to the core of the Catholic faith and those which do not, said Bishop Robert Lebel, the new president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB).

Lebel and CCCB vice-president Thomas Fulton, bishop of St. Catharines (Ont.) will visit Rome in January and will ask for clarification of the oath.

In the past, people in parish ministries and teaching positions affirmed their allegiance to the church in the words of the ancient Nicene Creed. They also agreed to accept the "solemn deliberations" of the church on matters of faith and morals. The re-worded oath, however, commits them to "adhere with religious submission of will and intellect" to all teachings of the Pope or the bishops.

Some teachings are obviously more important than others, but the new oath makes no distinctions, said Lebel. Furthermore, the bishops speak in a variety of forums, ranging from solemn gatherings such as the Second Vatican Council, to small regional assemblies.

How much variance?

Not everyone follows every teaching of the Pope in matters of everyday life, Lebel added.

The church's teachings on birth control or social and economic principles, for example, are the subject of debate and varying degrees of allegiance among Catholics.

"Are they still Catholics if they don't accept these teachings?" Lebel asked.

A member of the bishops' conference staff, who said he "could live with it," nevertheless pointed out that the oath, which emphasizes obedience to church laws, itself violated those laws in the way it was presented.

According to Roman Catholic canon (church) law, to which those making the new oath pledge their allegiance, new canon laws take effect 90 days after their publication in a publication named, unless they specifically indicate a different date.

The new oath was first published Feb. 25, in the Vatican newspaper *Osservatore Romano,* where it was announced that the law took effect four days later, on March 1. The law was published in the Acta Apostalicae Sedis dated Jan. 9, but that issue was not actually released until March 15.

Father Alexander Tache, general secretary for the French sector of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, said the new oath came into effect before many bishops even knew it existed. In addition, official translations into English and French were not available for two months after the oath was published in Latin and Italian.

"It was really rushed into law," Tache said.

"All of a sudden, without consultation with the bishops' conferences, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith requires it for office in the church."

Keeping them in line?

The oath has caused consternation in some theological circles where it is considered a heavy-handed attempt by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Vatican's department for theological purity, to enforce discipline on liberal theologians.

It may be directed at groups such as the more than 100 prominent European theologians who last year signed the "Cologne Declaration" expressing their unhappiness with the direction of church, Tache said.

At the same time the oath was introduced, the church's Profession of Faith was modified. The modifications are interpreted by some theologians as forbidding any questioning about doctrines such as birth control or the ordination of women.

The re-worded Profession of Faith says people appointed to new teaching or leadership positions in the church will "adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman pontiff or the college of bishops enunciate ... even if they proclaim those teachings in an act that is not definitive." To some, that rules out any questioning of papal statements even when they are not stated as infallible doctrines of the church.

Tache said most Catholic leaders have little difficulty with the Profession of Faith, since it asks for allegiance to the historic doctrines of the church, but the oath of fidelity requires the same commitment to the canon law of the church.

"Many of these laws are very minor," Tache said. "It's too much to ask, for many people."

While they may be committed to upholding the laws of the church, they believe that swearing a solemn oath to that effect goes beyond the requirements of their faith, Tache suggested.

At their annual assembly here, the hottest book going was a small booklet entitled "Before the New Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity," written in French by Montreal theologian Andre Naud. The booklet could be seen on the desks of many bishops during the conference.

Noting that the new oath could interfere with Catholic relations with other Christian groups, Naud compared it to "a blank cheque on which the [leadership of the church] will be able to write anything it likes concerning faith and morals."

Naud called the new profession of faith "a veritable intellectual abyss into which we are invited to fling ourselves with our eyes closed."

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Pope addresses conference-goers about church's stand on AIDS

VATICAN CITY, Italy (EP) — At the conclusion of a three-day conference on AIDS in which Roman Catholic delegates split over the issue, Pope John Paul II addressed the gathering of more than 1,000 to express the church's support of those who have contracted the deadly disease, and to reaffirm the church's stand against the "morally illicit" behaviour which is the most common cause of the disease.

The Pope said that people must change their lifestyles if they are putting themselves at risk of contracting the AIDS virus. "The necessary prevention against the threat of AIDS is not inspired by fear, but instead by the choice of a healthy, free and responsible lifestyle," he said.

Although the Pope did not use the word "condom," church officials said he was clearly ruling out its use. "It is morally illicit to champion a prevention of the AIDS sickness based on recourse to means and remedies that violate the authentically human sense of sexuality," he said.

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Baptist missionary recognized by Aquino for work with poor

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Philippine president Corazon Aquino recently honoured Harold Watson, a Southern Baptist missionary, for his help in developing agriculture in the southeast Asian island nation.

Watson was one of three recipients of awards at the event, sponsored by the Philippine American Foundation, which recognized significant contributions to the Philippines by private-sector organizations. Also recognized were the Rockefeller family, which has funded health and agricultural assistance in the Philippines since 1913, and CARE, a human assistance organization which has worked in the Philippines since 1949.

Watson is responsible for establishing the Baptist Rural Life Center, an agricultural training center on the Philippine island of Mindanao. Watson also played a strong role in developing Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT), which helps the country's resource-poor farmers.

"The Rural Life Center provides a working model for alleviation of poverty for the poorest Filipino farm families subsisting in infertile upland soils," the citation said. "The government of the Philippines hereby expresses appreciation to the American members of the Baptist Church who have supported Reverend Watson's work in Mindanao and who have provided support for the establishment of the Rural Life Center."

Watson, an agriculturalist from Brooklyn, Mississippi, went to the Philippines about 25 years ago. He began battling the climate and a tradition of poor farming techniques in an attempt to turn denuded hillsides into thriving gardens. For years he tried and failed to grow food on a 47-acre demonstration farm in the island nation.

Then he and his Philippine assistants developed SALT, a natural terracing plan that has formed the backbone for countless programs integrating farming technology, health, nutrition, and faith. Its influence is visible throughout the Philippines and many parts of Asia.

Watson and the center have won numerous awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award for international understanding, considered by many in Asia to be as prestigious as a Nobel Prize.

International radio ministry granted permission to build studios in U.S.S.R.

MOSCOW, (EP) — Trans World Radio (TWR), an international Christian radio network, has been granted permission by Soviet officials to set up radio production facilities in the Soviet Union. It is the first time that such permission has ever been granted an interdenominational religious organization, according to TWR news reports.

"It's a new day and a new opportunity for production in co-operation with the Russian believers themselves," said Dr. Paul E. Freed, TWR president.

TWR plans to build at least three studios, a mobile recording vehicle, and several portable recording units. TWR will be working with the evangelical community in the Soviet Union as co-partners in reaching the Soviet people with the gospel.

Since 1956, TWR has been broadcasting gospel messages to the Soviet Union from Morocco, using high-powered AM and shortwave transmitters. It has long been their goal to produce at least half of their Russian programs on Soviet soil.

"With studios located right in the Soviet Union, Soviet Christians there will now be able to reach their own people with the gospel via our facilities," said Paul Semenchuk, TWR Russian Ministries Co-ordinator. "Not only will the programs have a greater sense of presence, they will be prepared by individuals who best know the needs of the church and its people."

Rewriting laws

In late October, Freed and Semenchuk joined Soviet church leaders in meeting with a top official in the Soviet Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Soviet laws "are being rewritten to allow the development of what you propose," TWR was told.

The first studio, in Moscow, should be operational in March of 1990. Additional centers will be installed in Kiev and Minsk.

"Humanly speaking, this opportunity has come about as a result of the developing *glasnost* and *perestroika* in the Soviet Union," Semenchuck said. "But it is an answer to years of prayer by many people around the world."

TWR plans to broadcast at least two regular programs, one directed at teenagers and the other at the general population, as well as actual live Sunday worship services for shut-ins who cannot attend church. The facilities will also be available for other international Christian radio ministries, including HCJB (Heralding Christ Jesus' Blessings), and FEBC (Far East Broadcasting). "In each case, it will be a ministry from Russian people to Russian people," said Freed.

Dutch church officially withdraws from Reformed body

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The Christian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (CGKN) formally withdrew its membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Council at its synod meeting in October. The CGKN suspended its membership at the REC synod in Harare. The principal reason given was the CGKN's differences with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN), also a member of the REC. The CGKN believes that the GKN should have been requested to resign from the REC, but the REC synod refused to do so.

A secondary reason given for withdrawal was the alleged politicking going on at Harare. Although this charge has been denied, the committee reporting on the Harare synod defended its conclusion. Its chair, Rev. P. den Butter, said they were "fully convinced" of the truth of this charge.

The synod further debated what the nature of their future relations should be with the GKN. Several proposals were made, but a full debate and a decision will not take place until the synod's November meeting.

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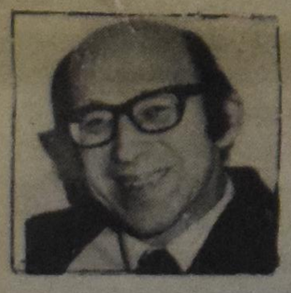

Pastoral letter

Leonard Schalkwyk

Do ministers get enough pension at retirement?

The subject of the pension fund for pastors often gets discussed by ministers, councils and church members. I have hesitated to write about it, for I do not want to give the impression that I am a union leader. Neither do I write for myself and my dear wife, primarily, for we have such vitality and health, that we plan to go on working for many years, the Lord willing. I have also waited for more capable "lay" people to write about this, but no one has come forward.

So, let me write in this month of December about bringing some cheer to retired ministers.

The other day I met a man of our health spa club who had just retired. He said to me, "Now I get 80 per cent of my salary." Another man, who had been a factory worker, said he got only 75 per cent.

Then they turned to me and said, "When you retire in 10 years, what will you get?" I answered, "If I ever retire, sauna and health club are out. I will get about 20 per cent of the average income in our outfit." "Shame!" they all cried. "What company is that?" "The church," I said.

My dear reader, if you do not believe me, check with any retired minister.

The income of a retired minister in the Christian Reformed Church for the year 1990 will be $8,275 per year.

Do you see that I took a hot potato in my hands by taking up this subject?

"Aw," I can hear someone say, "But the retired minister will get Canadian Pension and old age pension." Sure, that will be enough to keep soul and body together, but not enough to pay the rent of a house.

In the past this way was different. Then the rule existed that the pension was determined every year at half of the average income of the active ministers in the denomination in the previous year. So that was 50 per cent, which was not that much, but fair. No minister becomes a minister to get rich, but the church has a task to support their ministers adequately.

"But," I hear another pewsitter say, "The Minister's Pension Fund certainly takes into account inflation?" Sure, the last couple of years the minister's pension payments have been raised by 2.2 per cent per year!

The minister's widow's pension is also inadequate, by the way.

That something is drastically wrong here, is evident. That is why some people have asked me to write about it.

Who is at fault?

Not the churchmembers, who give $40 per family per year for the Minister's Pension Fund.

Who is at fault?

Not the consistories, who faithfully pour all this money into the Minister's Pension Fund! This is one quota, for which most churches pay 100 per cent, it has priority — What can be done about this injustice?

Only *you* can change it, by asking your consistory to overture classis to overture synod to ask the fund to "study" this matter.

"Honour those whose work is preaching and teaching." (I Tim. 5:17).

Leonard Schalkwyk is pastor of Springdale (Ont.) Christian Reformed Church.

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Outreach in Greenland

Photo: R.J. Schraa

Inuit girls at confirmation in their beaded Native costumes.

Raymond J. Schraa

It was a stormy night! Our small, rebuilt fishing boat was pitching and rolling. Sprays of icy water were splashing over the bow and up against the steerhouse. My feet were planted as far apart as possible and I was hanging on to the steering wheel to avoid being thrown against the walls.

Sven Olav, the skipper, checked the engine below, then looked at the depth control unit and watched the radar screen for icebergs that might loom up in the fog. Some of the people on board were seasick but others were sleeping. It was near midnight but still fairly light because the sun does not set during the summer months this far north.

What was a 60-year-old man from landlocked Alberta doing on this boat in Davis Strait off the coast of Greenland? Who were the other 12 people on board and why were they there?

It all started in 1985 when Errol Martens, a Youth With A Mission (YWAM) leader in Alberta, asked the Lord for which country he should pray. To his great surprise, Greenland came to mind. He knew next to nothing about that country but while continuing to pray, accumulated as much information as possible.

In 1986 he made a "trailblazing" trip to Greenland and contacted Sven Olav Asblom, the director of the mission house in Sisimiut. What was the great need of the Inuit people of Greenland and what could be done for them?

The result of that meeting was that in 1987 the first Discipleship Training School (DTS) was held with some Inuit, Canadian and Swedish students.

Because of a special arrangement, I had retired early and we were able to serve with YWAM in Greenland in 1988. Although my wife, Wilma, had been involved with the school in 1987, a lot of things were new to us when we took over the leadership. Being involved with a different culture and a foreign language was difficult as well as challenging.

Greenland is a self-governing territory of Denmark. Home rule was established in 1979, and matters of social welfare, education, and cultural affairs are now decided by its own parliament.

Greenland is the largest island in the world, with an area of about 2,175,600 square km. Most of the island is continually covered with snow and ice. Only the coastal areas are snow-free during the short summer months. It is in these coastal areas, mostly on the west side of the island, where the people live. The population is approximately 55,000 of which about 45,000 are Inuit. The remainder are Danish.

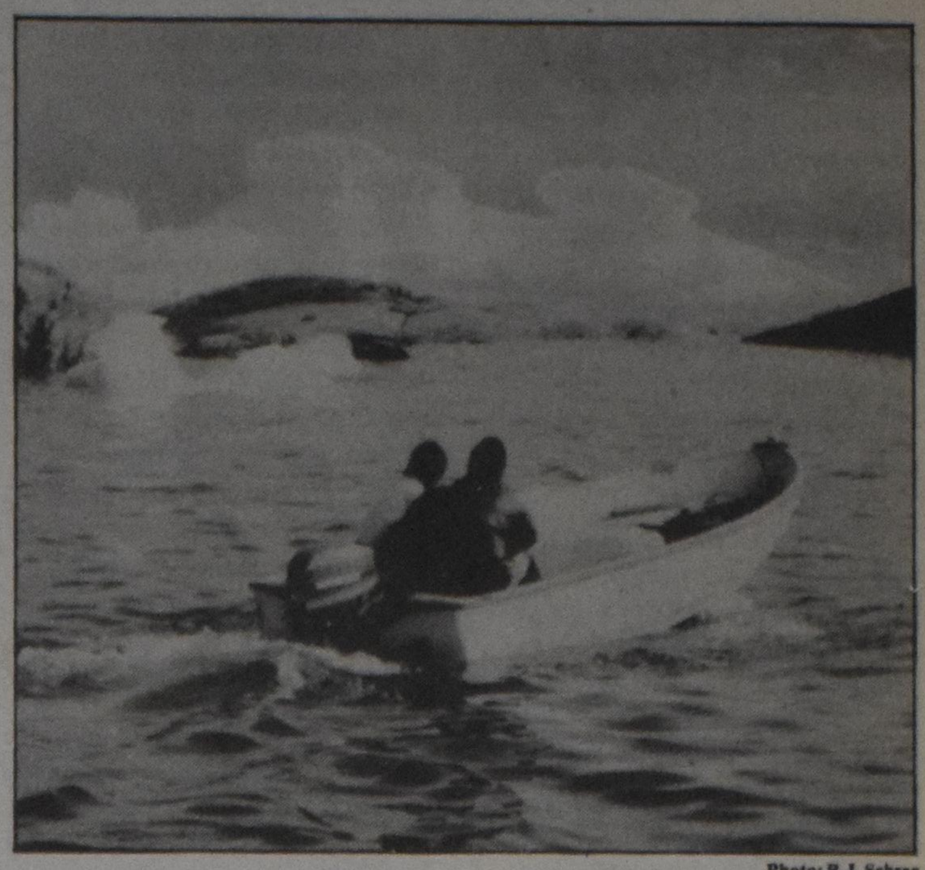

Photo: R.J. Schraa

Because there are no connecting roads in Greenland, boats are the major means of transportation.

There is some mining, but the main source of income is fishing and seal hunting.

In summer one may find many different kinds of wild flowers that brighten up the treeless landscape. Several species of birds, among them the majestic eagle, are also present. Among the larger animals are whales, seals, and reindeer. North of the arctic circle hundreds of sturdy sled dogs are used extensively during the winter months by the Inuit when they hunt.

Fallen away

In 1721, Hans Egede, a Norwegian Lutheran missionary, came to Greenland and began to Christianize and baptize the local Greenlanders. Nearly every village, be it ever so small, has a Lutheran church. Although most of the Inuit belong to that denomination, there seems to be little personal faith. Alcohol abuse is prevalent and consequently there are relatively few solid Christian homes.

It was gratifying that we had 10 Greenlandic young people in our second Discipleship Training School. Also remarkable was the fact that most of them told us that they heard about the Lord from their grandparents. They would say, "My grandmother or grandfather read the Bible to me, and told me about Jesus." It seemed that the grandparents knew about the Lord, but their children had lost that knowledge.

The young people were tired of a life without purpose and somehow had begun to search for meaning. Through some of the missionaries they had come to a personal faith in the Lord Jesus and now wanted to deepen their walk with him. During the lecture phase of the school we witnessed the grace of God in each one of them as they grew in maturity and struggled to overcome wrong habits.

Outreach into the northern communities was the practical aspect of the school. Here the students would apply what they had learned, they shared their faith with their own people. On that stormy night we were on our way to do just that. Suddenly, when manoeuvring among fascinating towering icebergs, engine trouble developed. Pulling up in the lee of a huge iceberg we tried to fix the problem, but the waves were too choppy. After putting a temporary replacement in one of the plugged fuel lines, we limped to the nearest village a couple hours up the coast. Entering the small village

Photo: R.J. Schraa

Rune Asblom's mission boat, which was wrecked during a snow storm in November 1987. Rune and his wife saved their lives by swimming to shore, where they were rescued four hours later by a police patrol boat.

Feature

Photo: R.J. Schraa

The old church of Sisimiut was built in 1773 and is still used in preparing for confirmation and as a parish hall. The arch in front of the church consists of huge whale bones.

harbour behind some rocky outcrops, we found a place to anchor and Sven Olav had time to make proper repairs.

Making the delay a time of opportunity, permission was obtained to use the school for an evangelistic service and, going from house to house, we invited the villagers. We found the Northern Inuit very open and receptive to the gospel. Almost everyone would come out to our meetings. Some of the women even called their husbands, who were fishing at sea, to come home because a group of young people had come to the village.

Itinerant preachers

So we sailed from village to village sharing the good news with music, drama, testimonies, and distribution of Christian literature. One of the most memorable meetings was at a fishing camp north of Upernavik at midnight! It was exciting to see entire families come away from their tents and enjoy this rare midnight "open-air" encounter. One Native woman who had been opposing us by saying to her friends that we were telling a lot of lies had a change of heart when some of us personally shared God's love with her. Later her husband asked if his wife and family could travel with us to another village. Sitting in on one of our on-board Bible studies, she opened up and allowed us to pray for her deaf, mute son.

We also hosted a week-long family Bible camp which was held in an abandoned village. Christians from remote areas had come together for a week of teaching, fellowship and fun. It was a time of relaxation and encouragement for this Gideon's band of believers. With the Lord on their side they too will do great things.

All the students wrote summaries of what they learned and experienced during the past four months.

Kristine wrote the following: "When I first came to the school, I felt cold and thirsty for God's love. I trusted that God wanted to teach me more from his Word. The biggest things I learned was to forgive myself and to forgive others, to listen to God's voice, to listen to the Holy Spirit, to be able to tell what is good and bad, and to have faith in God that he will answer prayer. Putting all things together I can see God's love and that he never fails if we trust in him."

From Nuka: "I have received a lot both for the spirit and the body. Many things that I did not understand I understand now. I think that when the school is over and we go back home there will be many things which we can and will use. Our outreach has been a real blessing. There I could see how open the people were to hear about Jesus." Later we received a letter from Nuka with the exciting news that her parents had come to know the Lord when we were in their hometown.

From Niels: "When DTS started, I understood that God wanted to do much in my life. John 15:2 became an important verse for me. I understood that God wanted to change me and to take away things in me which did not fit in his plan. I understand now that in order to let the Lord work in my life I must be willing to humble myself and learn to forgive and be forgiven."

From Else: "Sometimes we don't really agree with each other and it is hard to see the best in the other person. Since the day that Wilma stood in front of the class sharing how difficult it can be at times to see Christ in other people, I have been looking more closely at myself. Today I am trying always to see Christ in others, and that made it much easier to live with my roommates at the school. I have really been growing in the Lord. I want to go on with him also after the school when I come home where there will be many problems."

Must be flexible

To go into another culture is usually not easy. One has to learn to adapt and be flexible. Although there were some problems, seeing the life-changing power of the gospel in the lives of the students, we give thanks to the Lord for his grace and his peace.

Another DTS is scheduled for the coming summer and already 13 students are enrolled. Looking forward to going back to Greenland, we hope to teach at the school and visit with and encourage last year's students.

A song from the Christian Reformed Church's *Psalter Hymnal* sums up the reason for going.

From Greenland's icy mountains, from India's coral strand, where Africa's sunny fountains roll down their golden sand, from many an ancient river, from many a palmy plain Christ calls us to deliver his lands from error's chain.

"Go and teach" is what Jesus said when he left this earth, and that is what Youth With A Mission is committed to doing. Greenland, considered by some to be the "uttermost part of the earth," has many resources. However, its greatest resource is its friendly, warmhearted people. They are people with hopes and dreams and also with many needs. It is to them that we are privileged to bring the life-giving gospel.

Photo: R.J. Schraa

Inuit houses in the town of Upernavik, with the Lutheran church in the foreground.

Evangelisten

we are sailing the arctic waters
west of the world's largest island
Greenland
the sun's shining on the waves
whitecapped
sparkling
cold
steadily cruising northward
to reach
this tiny settlement
of twenty or so houses
fishermen, hunters, and their families
live here
a little church on a hill
a tiny schoolhouse with one room
isolated, almost forgotten
no roads, only a path
on the treeless barren ground
people living close to the earth
and to the sea
at times despairing
lonely
drinking too much
who can help?

★

quietly the Evangelisten
slips into the tiny harbour
people run to the dock
eager to hear
what we have to share
fishermen come home from sea
the little schoolhouse is full with children
precious Inuit children
their eyes are glued on our puppets
that tell about the love of Jesus
we share!
parents read the magazines
we hand out
all are blessed

★

out into the stormy night
sails the Evangelisten
icy waters splashing over the bow
up against the steerhouse
the boat is pitching and rolling
the diesel engine straining
to keep a steady course
helped by radar
through ice and fog
we sail northward
to another village
motivated by the love of God
to bring light
where there is darkness

Issue

The place of religion in society: a most critical issue

Paul Marshall

Adrian Guldemond is deeply committed to the protection and enhancement of Christian schools in Ontario ("Religion in the Public Schools"; *Calvinist Contact*, November 10 and 17, 1989). This is a vitally important cause and it, and he, deserve our support. When he considers the issue of religion in the public schools, he is concerned with how this reflects support for a distinctly Christian alternative. This, too, is an important concern, and one I share with him.

However, Dr. Guldemond seems to consider the question of religion in public schools *exclusively* from the perspective of the status of Christian schools and this leads him to give a somewhat one-sided, distorted picture. There are a variety of other important considerations involved in public dealings with religion. Let me mention just two of them:

First, I believe, as does Dr. Guldemond, that Christian children should be educated in Christian schools and that the principal task of government with respect to education is to enhance the ability of communities to run their own schools. However, most Christians in this country do not agree with us as yet, and they are committed to sending their children to public schools. They may be wrong, I think they are wrong, but that is their position.

Accountable to the public

The issue before us, *given this situation*, is: *What is the responsibility of the government with respect to the public schools*. Should it simply ignore the wishes of these Christian parents? Should it, in effect, treat them as non-citizens or non-entities whose beliefs and wishes should be discarded? Should the government ignore religion entirely in these schools and thus further reinforce the false impression that religion is irrelevant? Should it officially teach secularism to its students?

I do not think that any of these is a just solution. Rather, if the government, and most Canadians, insist on maintaining public schools then these schools must try, as much as they are able, to meet the needs and wishes of the public. This means, among many other things, that the religious beliefs of the public, including Christians, must find their place in the curriculum.

Could this be done fully or perfectly? No, for the public school is inherently tension-ridden. But insofar as public schools exist they must be held accountable to the public and not willingly surrendered to a secular monopoly.

Indeed the argument that Dr. Guldemond uses (that as there is pluralism then no "religion" should be taught) applies to every subject and his conclusion should be that *nothing* should be taught. As such his argument is a basic reiteration of the Reformed argument against the idea of public schools as such. It is a good argument and I agree with it as a critique of public schools. But it does not tell us what should go on in public schools when they do in fact exist. That Dr. Guldemond thinks that his arguments have a particular force in "religion" rather than in, say, history or science, may betray a dualism in which it is thought that there is less agreement about "religion" than about other matters.

The question we face is, what is the responsibility of a government to the parents in the public of Ontario (in this context, especially to Christian parents) who send their children to public schools? The basic question is one of governmental responsibility in a diverse society.

The place of religion in society

A second major issue highlighted by the debate over religion in public schools is a more general one. This is the question of how our courts will define the relation of religion and the state. This is a matter that goes far beyond the question of public schools and it is for me the key question in this whole debate. *It is the most important legal question concerning the matter of religion that Canadian Christians have faced this century*. Perhaps here a little background is necessary.

Since the entrenchment of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 many of our key legal and political concepts are being defined and redefined. These include "equality," "freedom," "religion," "freedom of religion" and "discrimination." These redefinitions are not always announced in the newspapers but take place quietly, day by day, in the arguments and decisions in our courtrooms. Slowly precedents build up and shape new ways in which judges (and politicians) see and make decisions.

The argument is that the solution to diversity in or disagreement concerning "religion" in the public realm is the exclusion of "religion" entirely.

Most changes only become apparent when large decisions, such as those concerning Sunday shopping or abortion burst on the scene. But these "large" decisions are sometimes not a major change in themselves: instead they only reveal changes which have already taken place. The crucial decisions and moves may have been made two or 10 years before, but generally Christians never noticed them. One result is that we are often complaining after the fact.

Shaping the law

Other people in our society are not so passive. Organizations such as the Canadian Civil Liberties Union or the National Citizens Coalition have prepared programs of litigation. They are actively looking for cases which highlight the issues in which they are interested and which will establish the precedents they want. Many people in our society are actively seeking to shape the law: some with a great deal of success.

Unless we Christians are prepared to do the same, in all likelihood we will merely complain frustratedly while our society is made ever more secular. We need to be involved in a consistent, organized and focused program of litigation around the definition and place of religion in our society.

This is where the question of religion in public schools comes in.

The Elgin County case now moving through the court system is one that has been taken up by the Canadian Civil Liberties Union (CCLU). The CCLU does many worthwhile things, but in matters of religion seems at times to be given over to a dogmatic secularism. It believes that "non-discrimination" and "freedom of religion" mandate that religion should have no role in political and governmental decisions and that it should be confined to the private sphere of life.

Religion excluded

One of the CCLU's arguments in Elgin County is that because there is a diversity of religious viewpoints in Ontario schools then the government must exclude religion from those schools. It is this argument that most worries me and I am more concerned about it than I am about religion in public schools per se. I would be relatively happy to lose the case as long as this argument is not accepted and entrenched in the courts.

The argument is that the solution to diversity in or disagreement concerning "religion" in the public realm is the exclusion of "religion" entirely. This argument is not limited to religion in schools, or to schools in general. If accepted it will affect schools (Christian or otherwise), colleges and universities (Christian or otherwise), businesses, unions and perhaps churches themselves. Any claims made in the public arena based on Christianity will be deemed suspect. (Already in the abortion debate we are seeing people assert that governments should listen to no arguments based on "religion.")

This is one of the fundamental issues at stake in the courts and in the hearings around religious education. If we do not face it now, we could reap its bitter fruit in coming years.

The debate over religion in public schools is now a focal point of how the law will understand Christianity and secularism. It is on issues of this kind that the Reformed community has previously shown leadership. It should not neglect its task now. It cannot sit idly by while Christian faith is in danger of being legally excluded from the public realm.

For these reasons I believe that the actions of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada are of the utmost importance to, and deserve the support of, Reformed Christians.

Paul Marshall teaches political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto and is co-chairperson of the Social Action Commission of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

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Report examines bias in TV news

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Television news' "biased" treatment of poverty has become a case study in the objectivity of news reporting. A study by the Fraser Institute, a conservative think tank in Vancouver, says that CBC and CTV television news reports portray only the most vulnerable poor people, such as the disabled and single mothers with small children.

Images of the poor as substance abusers or able-bodied people unwilling to work are avoided, reports Lydia Miljan. When cutbacks in welfare are threatened, the news media will tend to picture only families headed by women, whereas Statistics Canada says there are more poor families headed by men than women, she adds.

What would you think if a government said it was going to cut welfare payments to single employable recipients? When that happened, says the Fraser Institute, the TV networks objected with statements like "the government is saying that we're going to encourage you to get off welfare by taking food out of your mouths."

To this the Fraser Institute protests that the government's aim was to reduce unemployment as a cause of poverty. To make either statement without the other would seem to reflect bias.

Both TV networks want the governments to do more to relieve poverty, says Miljan. CTV tends to be more critical of the government that CBC. Lloyd Robertson is quoted as saying that the feeling is growing that governments expect charitable organizations to bear too much of the burden of helping the poor.

The Fraser Institute suggests viewers look behind news reports for bias. Especially sensitive, they say, are statements or inferences about the causes of events. Their own bias is seen by their preferring news reports on poverty to show statistics rather than poor people, analysts say.

Calvin prof heads Christian geologists

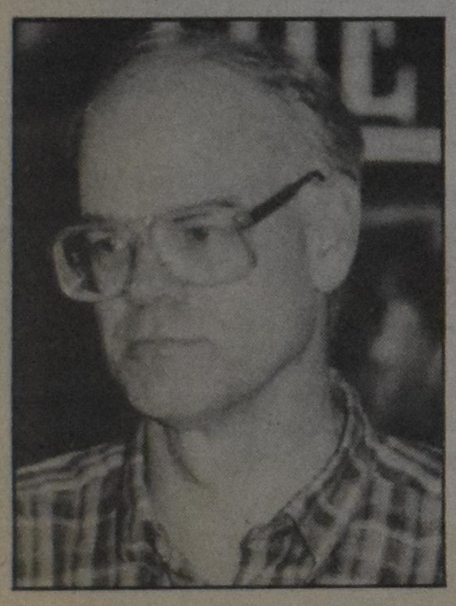

Photo: C.C. files

Dr. Davis A. Young, professor of geology at Calvin College.

C.C. staff

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Dr. Davis A. Young, professor of geology at Calvin College here, was recently elected to be the first president of the Affiliation of Christian Geologists.

In addition to promoting fellowship among Christian geologists, the group aims "to promote the integrity of geology as a scientific discipline, to investigate ways in which Christian faith and geology bear upon one another, to educate the Christian public about geology, to develop avenues of witness to non-Christian geologists, and to promote Christian stewardship and service in geology." The new group was formed under the wing of the American Scientific Affiliation.

Young's research has centred on the study of rocks. He has degrees from Princeton, Penn State and Brown universities. Before coming to Calvin College in 1978 he taught at New York University and the University of North Carolina.

Christian school movement grows in B.C.

C.C. staff

LANGLEY, B.C. — In 12 years the Society for Christian Schools in British Columbia has grown from 15 schools with 2,177 students to 40 schools with 6,378 students, reports Judith Zandbergen.

This is an increase of 708 students from last year. An additional 120 home schoolers are registered with the schools. All the same, two member schools needed to close in June due to decreasing enrolments: Vancouver Christian Secondary School and Sooke Christian School.

The society is now located on the campus of Trinity Western University. Educational co-ordinators are John Vanderhoek and Lee Hollaar.

The president of the society, Dr. Edward Piers, professor of chemistry at the University of British Columbia, was recently honoured by being elected as a Fellow of The Royal Society of Canada, the nation's most distinguished learned society.

Alberta Christian schools honour legislator who initiated government funding

Robert VanderVennen

EDMONTON — Donald S. Fleming received special recognition from the Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta at its annual meeting for having introduced a private member's bill into the Alberta Legislature that eventually led to provincial funding for independent schools.

Fleming rose in the legislature on March 4, 1966, to introduce this motion, which was seconded by MLA Bob Simpson:

"WHEREAS the Government advocates the principle that every child in Alberta should be assured an equal opportunity for education, regardless of financial circumstances or place of residence; and

"WHEREAS many parents, who desire their children to receive their education in an atmosphere and environment other than that of the public school system, have established private schools:

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Legislative Assembly urge the Government to consider means of extending a measure of financial assistance to private schools teaching the Alberta Curriculum."

After debate on the motion on March 10, 22, and 29 the matter was put to a vote and it was carried on March 29, 1966. All approved independent schools in Alberta now receive significant provincial funding from education tax receipts, and recently a special act was passed which recognizes and regulates independent schools.

Donald Fleming was a Social Credit MLA at the time he introduced the bill. He and his wife now live in Kelowna, B.C.

1,000 senior citizens invade Calvin College

C.C. staff

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The 10th annual Senior Citizens Day brought 1,000 seniors to Calvin College to see how their grandchildren live and work.

They filled the Fine Arts Center to be greated by Calvin Theological Seminary president, James De Jong, to hear student musicians, to sing hymns under the direction of music professor Carl Kaiser, and to hear a talk on "China and its Mysterious Church" by Professor Clarence Vos.

And they drank some coffee and "Kletzed."

Photo: Calvin College

Dean of Women Joy DeBoer pours coffee for seniors at Calvin College.

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For the time being...

Adrian Peetoom

1989: the year of Psalm 2

Each of us will have his or her own 1989 to remember. Those who have experienced great personal joy or tragedy will see the rest of this year's events as mere framework. But for others, it is hard not to think of Eastern Europe as 1989's front-centre. It was an astonishing year, the facts constantly outrunning our own imagination. *Time* magazine's "Person of the Year" will almost certainly come from there. My daughter Geraldine said, "Will John Le Carre be able to write any more novels about spies who came in from the cold, now that he's lost Checkpoint Charlie?"

All this brought to my mind the power of Psalm 2. Who of us human beings could have ever dreamed that the Poles, Hungarians and East Germans would simply rise up to declare their governments of no further use, and not see tanks and other blunderbusses in the streets. Leave it to our Almighty God to work miracles in a humorous way.

There is a tremendous amount to be celebrated at the end of 1989. Already, Soviets, Poles, Hungarians and East Germans can breath easier, talk freer, read more widely, go to church more often and travel more and farther, even though more than 50 years of war and communist oppression have left economic and social scars not easily removed. It is true that (at least with respect to Poland and probably Hungary) the power of God has been channelled also through the church, the Catholic Church in one and the Reformed Church in the other. Perhaps we'll discover that faithful Lutheran Christians in East Germany are linked to recent events there.

But as a minister recently said in a sermon, though not directly about this topic, we ought to be on guard against seeing any positive events simply as the inevitable outcome of positive and liberating forces embedded in the universe, even if we give these forces Christian names sometimes. In other words, the full power of Psalm 2 is not fulfilled in the 1989 political events.

Psalm 2 is useful always whenever we think politically, even in such small institutions as local churches. We must keep our eye on the jokes always present behind the public events, behind the obvious applications.

• Ronald Reagan and George Bush hailed Lech Walesa as one of their own. The joke is that they would bitterly oppose any American who ran against them with Walesa's fundamental ideas in the area of economics and social policy.

• And when on Nov. 12 the CBC morning newscaster reported that East Berliners had flocked into West Berlin by the thousands, I rejoiced about the crumbling of "The Wall." But then I also heard that they had brought their meagre savings, stood in line for their 100 Mark West German government gift, and promptly sorted themselves in wartime-like long lines to:

a) buy lottery tickets;

b) obtain credit cards with which to acquire Western sound equipment;

c) buy Western style clothing, especially blue jeans.

I find that interesting, and comforting in a Psalm 2 sort of way. Once more I've been stopped from adopting triumphalist doctrine, from putting my ultimate trust in any king or human movement, what with the consumer idols of the West perhaps rapidly replacing the tank-bullies of the East.

It makes me think that we should always reach for Psalm 2 the moment we're tempted to boast in any way about what, politically or institutionally, we or other human beings have wrought or are planning to. Psalm 2 seems a useful correction to our enduring comforting optimism, whether about Eastern European events or the affairs of local church councils (whose actions have not always inspired my own great confidence that "equipping the saints" is their priority).

I have not quoted any parts of that psalm in evidence, and your own reading of it may well quarrel with mind. For now, I'm simply convinced that its ironic power keeps addressing my own person first, individually and within institutions, and reminds me to put on my pants one leg at the time every morning. If I see its irony first addressed to my own life, I won't be so easily sucked in by the seductive powers of human success.

Adrian Peetoom lives in Chatham, Ont., and has not always been free from his own brand of triumphalism.

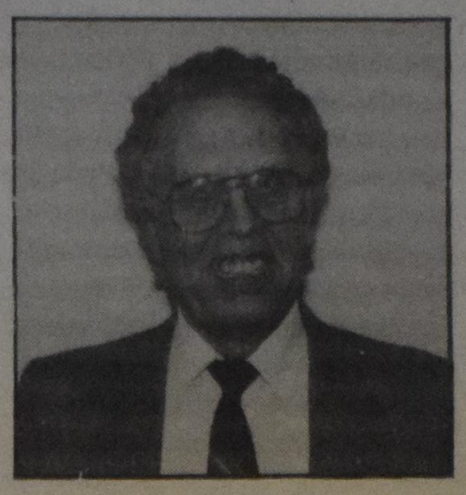
Psalm 2

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.
"Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."

The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.
Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,
"I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."

I will proclaim the decree of the Lord:
He said to me "You are my Son; today I have become your father.
Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.
You will rule them with an iron sceptre; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment.
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.



In and around the workplace

Ed Vanderkloet

Democracy in the workplace? (1)

Before I delve into the rather controversial topic of democracy in the workplace, allow me to digress, writing a little bit about democrcay as such.

By democracy we usually mean *political* democracy, but the word is also used for structures other than the state — for example, when we speak of democratic institutions (such as schools, labour unions, etc.) The word "democracy" is derived from the Greek and means "people's rule."

A democracy, therefore, is an institution or organization in which the people or members decide the direction that must be followed. Those in authority are ultimately accountable to those under authority — the very opposite of the old "divine rights of kings" system in which the ruler could do as he or she pleased and was accountable to no one on earth.

Stewardship and ownership

The limited space of a monthly column does not permit an indepth treatment of the topic, but as Christians we should be aware that our modern, democratic ideal has both Christian *and* humanist roots. The contrast between a Christian and a humanist concept of democracy involves a very fundamental and irreconcilable conflict of ideas. The two positions can best be summed up in the words "stewardship" and "ownership."

Called to account

On almost every page of the Bible we read that we are God's stewards. "Steward" is derived from the medieval English word *stigeweard*. *Stige* is an estate or enclosure (think of sty) and *weard* is warden or keeper. A human being then, is not the owner but a warden who looks after the estate of the owner. Therefore, we cannot do with the estate (the world, its resources, the environment, our fellow human beings) as we please, because it all belongs to God and one day we must give an account to the true Owner of what we have done with his property. It is no coincidence that so many of Jesus' parables deal with a landlord who unexpectedly comes home and demands an account from his stewards.

The fact that we are not owners but only stewards implies that all human authority comes from God, the Owner, and is by nature limited. There is no such thing as absolute authority, and that holds even when the bearers of authority have obtained their office via an election. To put it differently, those in position of leadership, regardless of how they obtained that position, are always accountable to God, the absolute sovereign.

Also, stewardship is not restricted to those in leadership positions, such as cabinet ministers, company managers, teachers, or parents. We all are stewards for we all are in charge. We are in charge of our own bodies, our possessions, our lifestyles, our interaction with fellow workers, and so on. Precisely because God's ownership involves everything, humankind's stewardship, too, is all-inclusive. Those who are called to govern or manage are simply given extra responsibility, over and above the responsibility we all have.

You may wonder what all this "theoretical stuff" has to do with democracy in the workplace. I hope to come back to that later on. As long as we keep in mind that what I have written thus far is not "theoretical stuff." It is highly relevant to our everyday dealings in the state and on the job. For much of our political unrest and industrial conflict stems from basic misconceptions about stewardship and responsibility.

This brings me to the other root of democracy, humanism. More about that next time.

Ed Vanderkloet does research for the Christian Labour Association of Canada in Mississauga, Ont.

Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P and M:

Our daughter has a very close friend. This relationship could lead to them getting married. We are thankful that the man is a Christian and a very fine person. Our concern is that he was married before. His wife left him with two children. We have problems with this and don't know whether or not to be happy with our daughter and her friend.

May we be happy and see God's hand at work in bringing them together, or should we be warning our daughter against such a marriage because it is sinful?

Dear "May We Be Happy?":

A simple yes or no won't do since every case is decided on its own merit. That decision is made by the church council on the recommendation of the pastor. Your daughter and her "close friend" should get in touch with their pastor immediately so that he can help them deal with the issues that accompany a remarriage.

Looking back, we wonder what caused the marriage break-up. If this man's ex-wife was unfaithful and unwilling to commit to the marriage, then he is free to remarry according to the exception clause mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 19:9. If, however, he bears an equal portion or much of the blame for the failure of the first marriage, it is essential that he has honestly dealt with this. The good news is that separation and divorce are forgiveable sins. Genuine repentance can lead to new beginnings, even including new marriages.

Looking at the present, we would absolutely insist that their new marriage be a Christian one that has the Lord as the third partner and the head of the new family. It must also be entered with the intention of a life-long commitment.

Looking ahead, your daughter will have to prepare herself for the highs and lows of a blended family. Premarital counselling with a family therapist is a necessity because she will become the stepmother of his two children. We recommend Angela Neumann Clubb's book *Love in the Blended Family* as an introduction to the special challenges that will become a part of her life if she chooses to marry a man with children from a former marriage.

Christian parents' deepest parental desire is that if or when their children marry, they marry a Christian. You make it clear that you already respect your daughter's friend as a "Christian and a very fine person." This makes us happy and hopeful.

Can you openly talk with this couple about the concerns which apply to any remarriage? Can you tell them why you are hesitantly happy about their relationship? Such a conversation could lay a lot of worries and fears to rest.

The tone of your letter tells us that your daughter is blessed with loving parents. If she plans to marry this man, your support and the acceptance of their church family will be crucial.

Dear P and M:

My husband continually gets on my case about the fact that I buy lottery tickets. As a Christian, is there something wrong with that, and does the Bible really speak to this?

Dear Taking A Chance:

Wouldn't it be great to win a million? Imagine what you could do with that much money!

If you just look at the small picture, it's not so wrong. What's the big deal if the Seven-Eleven store offers us a free ticket with a fill-up. Surely I'm not addicted to gambling if a friend at work gives me one as a birthday present. In fact, if I restrict myself to playing once a week, my lifestyle as a Christian is not in jeopardy, is it?

It's only when you stand back and look at the whole picture, that the problems with lotteries becomes apparent. The Christian Reformed Church's Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG)* has issued an excellent brochure which analyses this issue. Their arguments bear repeating:

"These three factors have contributed to the success of lotteries:

1. Tough economic times;
2. Our inclination to have a little "fun" when the world around us seems so bleak;
3. The lure of instant wealth.

"... We urge Christian people to see lotteries for what they really are: an appeal to greed, a poor kind of stewardship, a thinly disguised form of gambling, an essentially dishonest and manipulative scheme for raising funds, and a wholly inappropriate business for governments to have initiated and to be associated with.

"Lotteries ... undermine the general well-being of society, for they create false notions of what is really worthwhile in life. They enhance the illusion of the quick fix, the easy way out of our human dilemmas, the plausability of soft and painless solutions to profound, complex problems."

The CCG's biblical argument against lotteries is based on I Timothy 6:6-10 which says, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it ... For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

A pastoral call early in our ministry was a convincing argument. Peter regularly called on a man who was on workman's compensation due to a job-related injury. He was often depressed for good reasons and we would read an encouraging scripture passage to lift his spirits and give him hope. One afternoon we had just finished reading together when his son came home, threw two lottery tickets on the open Bible "These could help to get us out of this mess."

This has always been the picture that spoke a thousand words about this issue. Ever since, whenever a Seven-Eleven clerk asks either of us to sign in for our free ticket, we slide it back and say: "No thanks, we don't play." It usually raises their eyebrows and so we, too, get a bit of a thrill by NOT playing the lottery!

Our advice? Don't mess with lotteries. There are already too few distinguishing features in our lives that clearly identify us as Christians. Let your stand against lotteries raise a few eyebrows as well as the awareness in others that you place your hopes and dreams in "a sure thing."

*For a copy of "Canadian Lotteries: A Bad Bet" contact the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, 3475 Mainway, P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8; (416) 336-8344.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Willy Suk-Kleer, Bert Witvoet.

Christmas savings and safety tips

TORONTO (MCCR) — While others may be writing Christmas cards, the advisory "elves" at Ontario's Consumer Ministry have compiled a roster of Christmas savings and safety tips.

"From fire hazards to rip offs by phony charities, this otherwise joyous season is dotted with pitfalls for the unwary," Sorbara says. "But with a little foresight and planning, the risks of making mistakes can be cut down without cutting into the fun."

Ministry staff offer the following tips:

- Don't drink and drive, drink and ski, drink and operate machinery ...; basically, don't drink and do anything potentially hazardous.
- When buying a natural Christmas tree, be sure it is fresh by doing the "drop test." Hold the tree upright, a few inches in the air, then thump the stump on the ground. If needles fall off in abundance, the tree is not fresh.

To set up a natural tree, always cut about one inch off the trunk butt to allow the absorption of water. Stand the tree in a plentiful supply of water, taking care to refill the container as required. Trees may use from 500 ml (approximately 1 pint) to two litres (about two quarts) of water daily. Properly treated, natural trees can be kept indoors for two weeks.

- Before donating to non-church charities, check them out carefully by asking questions. Who benefits and what percentage of proceeds actually go to the charity? Get addresses and phone numbers of canvassers and charity headquarters. Remember, the existence of a federal-income-tax registration number is not a guarantee that the charity is legitimate.
- Don't burn gift wrap or other trash in fireplaces or wood stoves.
- Place Christmas trees — natural and artificial — away from all sources of heat and avoid putting them where they obstruct exits.
- A few days before they are needed, turkeys should be put in the refrigerator to defrost. Don't defrost poultry or, for that matter, any large amount of frozen food by leaving it sitting on the counter for extended periods. Consult kitchen guides to determine the amount of defrosting time required.
- Check store refund-and-exchange policies before buying anything, especially gift items. Keep all receipts, tags and product packaging until sure the merchandise is suitable.
- Check all outdoor and indoor Christmas lights to ensure they bear the CSA approval mark of the Canadian Standards Association. Don't leave tree lights on when the family is asleep or away from home.
- Don't give live animals as presents. Too many gift pets end up unwanted, neglected and homeless.
- Never let your credit card out of your sight or give the number out by phone unless you initiate the call and are certain of the company's honesty. Destroy all carbons from credit card slips.

Do the drop test to check natural Christmas trees for freshness, say consumer experts.

Classified

Christmas Greeting

BUISMAN: We wish our friends and relatives God's blessings at Christmas time and in the New Year.
Mr. and Mrs. Buisman, Holland Chr. Homes, TT #416, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2.

DE VRIES: To all friends and family: wishing you the joys and blessings of the Christmas season and much happiness in the New Year.
Mrs. Sjoukje De Vries, Holland Chr. Homes, TT#312, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2.

VAN MARRUM: We wensen familie, vrienden en bekenden een gezegend Kerstfeest en gelukkig Nieuwjaar.
Gerlof & Tina Van Marrum, Box 59, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0.

Thanks

VANDENPOL:
As it is impossible for us to answer all of you in person, we would like to publicly express our sincere thankfulness to all of you, who, by letters, cards and other tokens of friendship and appreciation, extended their congratulations to us and so really contributed to the celebrations of the 40th anniversaries of our wedding (Oct. 25) and our ministry (Nov. 5). The Lord who has been so good to us continue to bless you all!
Harriet and Al. J. VandenPol, Surrey, B.C.

Birth

BOUWERS:
"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever." (Ps. 136:1)
With joy and thanksgiving to our God, we, Bert and Anna, announce the birth of our first child

BRADLEY ALLEN

born on Nov. 8, 1989, weighing 7 lbs. 14 oz. Proud grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Wiebe Miedema of Dunnville, Ont., and Mr. and Mrs. Wesley Boelens of Wyoming, Ont.
Home address: R.R.#2, St. Anns, ON L0R 1Y0.

Marriage

VAN STAALDUINEN-POSTMA:
In the spirit of Christian joy we, William and Tine Van Staalduinen of Pantego, North Carolina, and Sander and Mary Postma of London, Ont., announce the marriage of our children

DOROTHY ANN
and
WAYNE JACOB

The ceremony will take place, D.V., Dec. 29, 1989, at 7 p.m., in Terra Ceia Chr. Ref. Church, Pantego, N.C., with Rev. Calvin Niewenhuis officiating.
Future address: 1030 North Dearborn, Apt. 811, Chicago, IL 60610.

Anniversaries

1964 December 18 1989
Ingersoll St. Catharines
Numbers 6:24
With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we,

PETER and EVELYN HEIDA

hope to celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary with our children:
Jennifer
John
Freda
Home address: 22 Orlando Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2N 6V7.

Obituaries

On Dec. 1, 1989, God took home his faithful servant

WIEBE DE VRIES

our dearly loved husband, father and pake.
"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Ps. 121:1, 2)
Lovingly remembered by his wife, Geeske DeVries of Jarvis, Ont., dear father and pake of:
Roelie Veldhuis — Caledonia, Ont.
Maurice, Wayne, Glenda
John & Henrietta DeVries — Watson Lake, Yukon
Loretta, Wendy, Vicky
Annie & Harry Bergshoeff — Mississauga, Ont.
Joy, Daniel, Matthew, Mark
Dick & Liz DeVries — Nanticoke, Ont.
Melanie, Wesley, Tracy, Lindsay, Bethany
Arlene & Lambert Stegeman — Surrey, B.C.
Gregory, Amelia
Bob & Lori DeVries — Townsend, Ont.
Chantal, Marissa
Wendy & Karl Weaver — Powassan, Ont.
Samantha, Sarah, Levi
We will miss him very much, but have great comfort and joy in knowing he is with our heavenly Father.
Correspondence address: Mrs. Wiebe DeVries, R.R. 1, Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0.

****

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)
On Sunday, Nov. 19, 1989, the Lord took home our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather

HENDRIK EEKHOF

in his 81st year.
Beloved husband of the late Jantje DeJonge (1978).
Dear father of:
Hendrik & Els Eekhof — Greenfield Park, Que.
Henny & Hendrik Donga — St. Hubert, Que.
Bruce A. & Joy Eekhof — St. Hubert, Que.
Willem & Francina Eekhof — Tavistock, Ont.
John & Judy Eekhof — Greenfield Park, Que.
Also one sister in Guelph — Mrs. Annie Meems, and one sister in the Netherlands — Mrs. Rie Vander-Leest.
Dear grandfather of 18 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
The funeral service took place on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 1989.
Correspondence address: Willem and Francina Eekhof, P.O. Box 759, Tavistock, ON N0B 2R0.

Obituaries

On Nov. 15, 1989, the Lord took home to glory

MARGARET KAMPS
(nee Salomons)

at the age of 73.
Beloved wife of Albert Kamps
Dear mother of:
Mae & David Abma — Lacombe, Alta.
Hank & Aleida Kamps — Lacombe, Alta.
Bill & Lorie Kamps — Lacombe, Alta.
John & Grace Westra — Calgary, Alta.
Ed & Marg Kamps — Red Deer, Alta.
Don & Paulene Kamps — Calgary, Alta.
Also survived by 20 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren as well as three sisters.
Funeral services were held at Woody Nook Chr. Ref. Church on Monday, Nov. 20, 1989. Pastor Cecil Van Niejenhuis officiated.
Correspondence address: Box 353, Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0.

On Dec. 5, 1989, at God's appointed time, He took home his child

HARMANNES PIETER SCHURINGA

at the age of 91.
We praise and thank our faithful God and Father for his comfort and loving care.
Psalm 145:2
His wife — Grace Schuringa (nee Van Til)
Father of:
Anna Broos
Hans & Trudy Uittenbosch
Joe & Mary Schuringa
Fred & Ann Schuringa
Andy & Rita Knibbe
20 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren.
Correspondence address: 1001 CT McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2.

After a lengthy illness, Dad was taken home to be with the Lord on Dec. 5, 1989, in his 82nd year.
"Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (Ps. 27:14)

TJEERD (Charles) STRIKWERDA

We praise God, that throughout his life, Dad was a living testimony of God's faithfulness.
Predeceased by his loving wife Akke in 1979.
Dear father of:
Andy & Henny Strikwerda — Bowmanville, Ont.
Jean & Nick VanderKwaak — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Evelyn & Sieds Vander Meer — Welland, Ont.
Richard & Sandra Strikwerda — Barrie, Ont.
Elizabeth & Tom Sikma — Woodstock, Ont.
Hans & Ida Strikwerda — Woodstock, Ont.
Philip & Bonnie Strikwerda — Lethbridge, Alta.
Fred & Edel Strikwerda — Langley, B.C.
Loving grandfather of 35 grandchildren (one predeceased) and 10 great-grandchildren.
He is survived by one brother, Ds. Foppe Strikwerda of Apeldoorn, the Netherlands.
The funeral service was held at Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont., with Rev. C. Fennema officiating.
Correspondence address: 95 Little Ave., Bowmanville, ON L1C 1J9.

Personal

Dutch-Canadian widower, early 70s, from London, Ont., area, would like to meet Dutch-Canadian lady or widow (60-70 yrs.) for companionship, friendship and perhaps marriage. Reply to File #2532, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.

Obituaries

"I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day." (II Tim. 1:12)
On Nov. 23, 1989, the Lord took home our beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

NEELTJE WESTERMAN
(nee Koopman)

at the age of 79.
Predeceased by her beloved daughter, Dicky, by only 13 days on Nov. 10, 1989.
Wife of: S.G. Westerman.
Mother of:
Gep & Bep Westerman — Hoofddorp, the Neth.
John Klingenberg — Ingersoll, Ont.
Alys Westerman — Amsterdam, the Neth.
Liz & Jack Klooster — Kitchener, Ont.
A very loving grandmother to 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.
The funeral service was held on Monday, Nov. 27, 1989, at the Chr. Ref. Church of Ingersoll, Ont., with Rev. P. Van Egmond and Rev. H. Praamsma officiating.
Correspondence address: 1007-7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2.

For Rent

Voor een geslaagde vacantie in Holland in de Achterhoek, het hele jaar door zomerhuisjes te huur met 2 of 3 slaapkamers, douche en verwarming. Voor inl. belt u B. Pennings, R.R.#3, Carrying Place, ON K0K 1L0; phone (613) 392-5981 of schrijf: G. Jansen, Kasselder St., 12, 6075 BW, Sinderen, Geld. Holland. Tel. 31-8354-406.

Real Estate

ADA REALTY LTD.
6012 Ada Blvd.
Edmonton, AB
T5W 4N9
(403) 471-1814
Sid Vandermeulen
Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.
Het vertrouwde adres.

Personal

Single Men and Women
If you are over 21 years of age and would like to find a partner in Christian marriage, write to: Christian Marriage Contact Service, P.O. Box 1127, Station B, Burlington, ON L7P 3S9. Please enclose $3.00 for a complete information package explaining our services.
Established in 1967.

Merry Christmas

Personal

The Consulate General would like to get in contact with the following persons:
BOS, Johannes Cornelis, born May 20, 1924, last known address in the Netherlands: Eikenlaan 6, Muiderberg. Immigrated to Canada on May 17, 1963.
BRATSCH, Jurgen Gunther, born June 20, 1960. Departed to Canada on August 18, 1987.
DIERTENS, Pieter, born March 14, 1887 in Foxwolde. Immigrated to Canada in 1924. Married Lucretia Harms.
DRIEBERGEN, Johannes Jacobus, born August 8, 1925 in Rijnsburg; last known address in the Netherlands: Burg. Meiboomstraat 2, Rijnsburg. Immigrated to Canada on May 1, 1953.
GAARKEUKEN, Johannes, born February 23, 1925 in Tienhoven; last known address in the Netherlands: Griftstraat 108, Utrecht. Immigrated to Canada on July 6, 1953.
DE GOEDE, Krijn Jacob, born July 29, 1924; last known address in the Netherlands: Voorstraat 57, Stellendam. Immigrated to Canada on April 24, 1953.
HOOGENDOORN, Willemijntje Antonia, born Feb. 18, 1902 in Amsterdam. Last known residence in the Netherlands: Amsterdam. Immigrated to Canada on Aug. 20, 1910, destination: Chesley, Ont.
SCHILT, Daan, born Oct. 9, 1924, last known address in the Netherlands: Oranje Nassaustraat 117, Leeuwarden. Immigrated to Canada on July 11, 1956.
SCHRODER (Schroeder, John) Herman Carl Jan, born April 13, 1935 in Voorburg; last residence in the Netherlands: Utrecht. Immigrated to Canada on April 6, 1960. Last known address here: 180 Avenue Rd., #106, Toronto, Ont. He operated an architect office there.
VAN DER VELDE, Gerardus Hendricus, born Sept. 15, 1924; last known address is the Netherlands: J. van Lennepstraat 278, Amsterdam. Immigrated to Canada on Sept. 14, 1959, destination Toronto.
VAN 'T WOUT, Gijsbertus, born Jan. 11, 1925, last known address in the Netherlands: J. Kloosstraat 8, Noordwijk. Immigrated to Canada on Mar. 19, 1954.
Consulate General of the Netherlands
1 Dundas St. W.,
Suite 2106, Box 2
Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3
Tel. (416) 598-2520

Help Wanted

Require qualified **herdsperson** for responsible revisory cattle care and milking. Will train. Three-bedroom house available. Starting salary $25,000 per year. Please supply resume to: Zandbergen Farms Ltd., R.R. #2, Brinston, ON K0E 1C0.

Established Red Deer-area distributor of Nalley's Potato Chips, Johnson Nuts and confectionery is looking for a **Driver/Sales person.** If suited, this position could also be an investment opportunity.
Please reply to: Kits Distributors Ltd., 6850-52 Ave., Red Deer, AB T4N 5H2. Bus.: (403) 347-7432; Fax: (403) 347-7449; Home: (403) 782-4347.

Full-time **housekeeper and nanny** wanted. There are four children in the family, ages 2-10 years. Please send references to: P.O. Box 69, Foxboro, ON K0K 2B0.

Married couple to work on Central Alberta dairy farm. Housing available. Please call (403) 784-3801.

Classified

Classified rates

Births $30.00
Marriages & Engagements . $35.00
Anniversaries $40.00
2-column anniversaries $80.00
Obituaries $40.00
Notes of thanks $30.00
Birthdays $30.00
All other one-column classified advertisements: $12.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $20.00. Letter under file number, $30.00 extra. Photos: $20.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.)
Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

OBITUARIES
Obituaries should be composed as they are to appear in *Calvinist Contact*. A sheet with information sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.
The $40.00 rate for obituaries covers any length up to six column inches. Calvinist Contact reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $12.50 per column inch.

NEWLYWEDS
Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in *Calvinist Contact* will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $15.00! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $15.00 and the couple's future address.

Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.
4-261 Martindale Rd.,
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.
Phone (416) 682-8311
Fax (416) 682-8313

Help Wanted

We need one full-time person (40 hrs.). Hours include one evening (Fri.), and every other Saturday. Work includes: serving customers, some typing, and all other aspects of Christian book selling. Requirements include a pleasing personality, willingness to work hard, eagerness to learn and a love for good books. Apply to store manager Mrs. Ina Klaassens or to owner Gerry Denbok: (416) 637-9151 (store), (416) 639-1075 (home).
The Family Christian Bookstore
750 Guelph Line, Burlington, ON
L7R 3N5

CARING FOR KIDS Mutual Support Systems, a residential program for children, is looking for families in the Niagara Peninsula that would provide foster care for a child in their own home. Please reply to:
Mutual Support Systems
R.R.#1, Perry Rd.,
Wellandport, ON
L0R 2J0
(416) 899-2311

Teachers

AGASSIZ, B.C.: Agassiz Christian School requires a **primary** teacher effective April 1, 1990, with a possible view for employment for the 1990/91 school year. Interested applicants please send resume and/or inquiries to: Mr. Rick Esselink, Principal, Agassiz Christian School, Box 323, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0 Tel. (604) 796-9310 (school), (604) 796-3209 (home).

Teachers

Toronto District Christian High School

One of our teachers is beginning a maternity leave on **March 19, 1990.** We are looking for a teacher to replace her for the remainder of the school year. The subjects to be taught are **French** and **Keyboarding.** Please send letters of application to:

Mr. Wm. Barneveld, Principal
TDCH, 7900 Kipling Ave.
Woodbridge, ON L4L 1Z5

Administrator/Principal

John Knox Christian School of Woodstock, Ont., invites applications for an **Administrator/Principal** position for the 1990 to 1991 school year. We are searching for an individual who is committed to a biblical, Reformed theology and educational perspective. Experience will be regarded as an asset. A profile is available upon request. Please send inquiries to:

SEARCH COMMITTEE
C/o John Knox Christian School
800 Juliana Dr., P.O. Box 243
Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8

Applications will be accepted until **January 31, 1990.** Contact Andy Luth at the following telephone number: (519) 424-9316.

Teaching Principal

The **Trenton Christian School** has an opening for a **Teaching Principal** commencing with the 1990/91 school year. Please send letter of application and resume to:

Principal
Trenton Christian School
20 Fourth Ave., Trenton, ON K8V 5N3
Phone (613) 392-3600

Applications will be accepted until Dec. 30, 1989

FREDERICTON, N.B.: The Greater Fredericton Christian Pre-School requires a part-time **Kindergarten** teacher for five mornings a week, beginning January 1990. Interested applicants should contact: Greater Fredericton Christian School Society, c/o G. Pot, 266 Tripp Rd., Keswick, NB E0H 1N0.

Christian Education in Canada's Capital

OTTAWA, Ont.: If you are a specialist in **Remedial Education** or **Kindergarten,** are looking for new challenges and rewards, consider: **OTTAWA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.** An opening is available March or September 1990. Please inform us about your abilities, ask about our needs. Write: Wm. Van Dyke, Principal, Ottawa Christian School, 2191 Benjamin Ave., Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6. Phone (613) 722-5836.

REGINA, Sask.: Regina Christian School, an interdenominational school with grades K-8, requires a **Teaching Principal** for the 1990/1991 school year. We are looking for someone with leadership and administrative capabilities who is interested in the challenge of promoting an integrated approach to Christian education in the community. Please send application with resume and references to: Larry Borowko, Chairman/RCSA, P.O. Box 4453, Regina, SK S4P 3W7.

LACOMBE, Alta.: Central Alberta Christian High School requires committed Christians for high school **core** areas in 1990/91. Experienced individuals with energy and willingness to grow professionally with a new school and also work in extracurricular areas are encouraged to apply. Contact Mr. J. VandenPol, Central Alberta Chr. High School, Lacombe, AB P0C 1S0, or phone (403) 782-4535.

TORONTO, Ont.: Toronto Central Christian School will have an opening in the **Primary grades** commencing January 1990. Please address your inquiries or resume to Jack Couperus, Principal, T.C.C.S., 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto, ON M4X 1C5, or phone (416) 968-2036.

Miscellaneous

Would like to buy **return flight tickets,** dated between Jan. 11-14, 1990, from Sarasota, Florida, to Toronto, Ont., for two people. Call: Bill Gerrits, Clinton, Ont. (519) 482-7564.

Joy to the World

Help Wanted

Dordt College

Openings for August 1990

Dordt College has openings for the 1990/91 academic year in the following areas:

ART
CHEMISTRY
ECONOMICS
THEOLOGY

The following positions may also be open for the 1990/91 year:

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER
ENGINEERING
HISTORY
POLITICAL SCIENCE
PSYCHOLOGY
THEATRE ARTS

Dordt College seeks to hire academically qualified individuals who are committed to a biblical, Reformed perspective and educational philosophy.

Review of candidates will begin on January 15, 1990, and will continue until positions are filled. Send letter, resume, and graduate transcripts to:

Dr. Rockne McCarthy
Academic Dean
Dordt College
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250

Dordt College complies with federal and state requirements for non-discrimination in employment. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Life Enrichment Activity Director

for Mount Nemo Lodge in Burlington.

Mount Nemo is owned and operated by the Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc.

RNA or RN or have a degree in Gerontology, course from Community Colleges accepted.

Current position involves working 20 hours per week. Ability to speak Dutch an asset.

Please direct all inquiries to Nancy McCullough or Clair Annis, Director of residential care.

c/o Mount Nemo Lodge
4486 Guelph Line
R.R. #2, Milton, ON L9T 2X6
(416) 335-3636

Miscellaneous

HDCH

HAMILTON DISTRICT CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL
92 Glancaster Road
RR#1, Ancaster, Ontario
L9G 3K9

benefits by your

RRSP and RRIF

INVESTMENT WITH THE

CRC-Community - RRSP/RRIF

Write: CRC Community RRSP
45 Harriet St.
Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

or call: Herman Louter
HDCH
(416) 648-6655

Classified/Events

Help Wanted

Dordt College

Economics Faculty Opening

Dordt College has an opening in its business administration/economics department for the 1990/91 year to teach introductory and upper level courses and to participate in a business seminar.

The doctorate in economics or business is preferred, but a doctorate near completion will be considered. Teaching experience is desirable.

Qualified individuals who are committed to a Reformed, biblical perspective and educational philosophy are invited to send letter, resume, and graduate transcripts to:

Dr. Douglas Ribbens,
Vice Pres. for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
Sioux Center, Iowa 51250
(712) 722-6030

Dordt College complies with federal and state requirements for non-discrimination in employment. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Events

Candlelight Service

with the

Adoramus - Maranatha Choir

John Hunse - Conductor

Sunday, Dec. 17, 1989, 7:30 p.m., at Maranatha CRC, York, Ont.

and

Friday, Dec. 22, 1989, 8 p.m., at Mt. Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont.

For Sale

Finally it's here!

You always longed to have an organ for yourself, an organ that sounds like the one in church, right? Well it's now possible. This organ is built for church or for your home. Thanks to "sampled wave processing" which means that the sound of organ pipes have been digitally recorded note by note. The organ then plays back actual pipe sounds. The sound is so close to pipe that on a recording it would be virtually impossible to tell from the real thing. No rhythm, whistles or drums, just good organ sound. Come in and play it, you will be convinced the same as I am.

The price? only $12,000.00 plus tax.

Call for an appointment with Len Van Geest for a demonstration.

(416) 689-6833

The PRAELUDIUM I
by Galanti Organ Builders

Van Geest
HOUSE OF PIANOS INC.
HWY. #5 JUST WEST OF WATERDOWN

For Rent

Four-bedroom detached home for rent in Holland Marsh, Ont. $750 per month plus utilities. Available January 1, 1990. Call (416) 775-2856 after 4 p.m.

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Available for call

Cephas CRC, Peterborough, Ont., recommends **Rev. Martin Vellekoop** to the churches as being available for call. Vellekoop recently completed service as a missionary to Japan. His temporary address is: c/o J. Vellekoop, 32 Beechwood Dr., Peterborough, ON K9J 1M4.

Address change

Herman and Alice Salomons, 108 Main Street, Bloomfield, ON K0K 1G0; effective February 1, 1990.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Benefit and grow with Christian perspective into seven subject areas. Write to:

Institute for Christian Studies
229 College Street, Suite 408
Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4

Miscellaneous

Close to the deadline — Fax it

Calvinist Contact has recently acquired a facsimile machine. We expect that many of our columnists, advertisers and readers will make use of this quick means of sending articles, ads and other communications. Our Fax number is (416) 682-8313.

We do ask those who submit communications to preferably send typed material, or otherwise messages written in clearly legible, black print. Include such information as name of sender, address, Fax or telephone number.

HCH

Attention Seniors:

Holland Christian Homes Inc.

is pleased to present a special information meeting on its proposed 215-unit condominium residences project. If you are a senior and are currently considering your future retirement housing alternatives the meeting will be of great interest to you. A complete update on the proposed project will be presented for your information. The meeting begins at 2 p.m. on **Saturday, December 30, 1989,** in the **Heritage Hall** located in **Holland Christian Homes, Brampton Complex.** Be sure to attend!

We love early birds!

Renew your C.C. subscription now!

Our Circulation Manager is at her job every day trying to keep our subscriptions up to date. We spend thousands of dollars each year in postage sending out renewal notices, reminders, etc. To top it off, Canada Post charges us an extra fee for using the handy business-reply envelopes we make available. **This means that in order to get a subscription renewed we have to pay close to $1.00 in postage alone!**

The computer label on your *Calvinist Contact* copy shows the month in which your subscription is due. If your label shows that your subscription is due one, two or three months from now, *kindly consider sending us the renewal fee ahead of time.* This way, you will be assured that C.C. will be coming to you regularly, as well as saving us time and postage expenses!

Be an early bird! We appreciate your co-operation. Please use the coupon below when sending us your renewal fee.

Subscription Renewal Coupon

Please renew my C.C. subscription for the period indicated:
☐ one-year renewal. Enclosed is $32.50 ($28.00 U.S.)
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☐ three-year renewal. Enclosed is $90.00 ($76.50 U.S.)

Name _____
Address _____
City/Town _____
Code _____

P.S. If possible, glue your label in this space, or enclose it.
Send to: **4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Events/News

Why is Canada so sparsely populated?

Photo: C.C. files
Homestead near Westwold, B.C.

Marcus Van Steen

(Canadian Scene) — For a nation that is as large and potentially wealthy as Canada obviously is, it remains surprisingly under-populated. With a total land area of 9,221,000 square kilometres, its population is just over 26 million. That comes to just under three people per square kilometre.

There are, of course, some areas of Canada that are inhospitable, but the same can be said of the Soviet Union which has some tracts of land similar to our Northwest Territories. But the USSR had 252,064,000 people in the census of 1974, or 11 people per square kilometre. Brazil, which has an area only slightly smaller than Canada and with substantial tracts of inhospitable land, manages to support 12 per square kilometre.

The reason usually given for the slow growth of Canada's population is our climate, but very few countries have ideal weather and many are more inclement than Canada. Finland, which lies entirely in the same latitude as northern Quebec and Baffin Island, has 14 people per square kilometre.

Bad start

The fact is that, as far as population goes, Canada got off to a bad start. French policy for the settlements along the St. Lawrence River was to use them to facilitate the exploitation of the valuable fur trade, and as a base for missionary work among the Natives. Neither activity required many people, and the fur traders actively discouraged immigration.

The first census in New France in 1666 showed 3,125 white people. At that time, more than 200,000 English people were living in colonies from Massachusetts to Maryland. This means that the American colonies were far more attractive than Canada to any European family looking across the Atlantic for a new home. It's well known that people prefer to move to large centres of population. In spite of Canada's empty land, 76 per cent of Canada's people live in cities. Brazil's population is 56 per cent urban, and the USSR figure is 60 per cent.

Canada's first major influx of immigrants came after the American Revolution, when 65,000 Loyalists fled from the rebel colonies to settle in Upper Canada and the Maritimes. But that was fewer than half of the fleeing Loyalists. The rest went to populous England and the British West Indies. During the next half-century, a period of mass migrations from Europe, the U.S. attracted seven million immigrants, and Canada about two million.

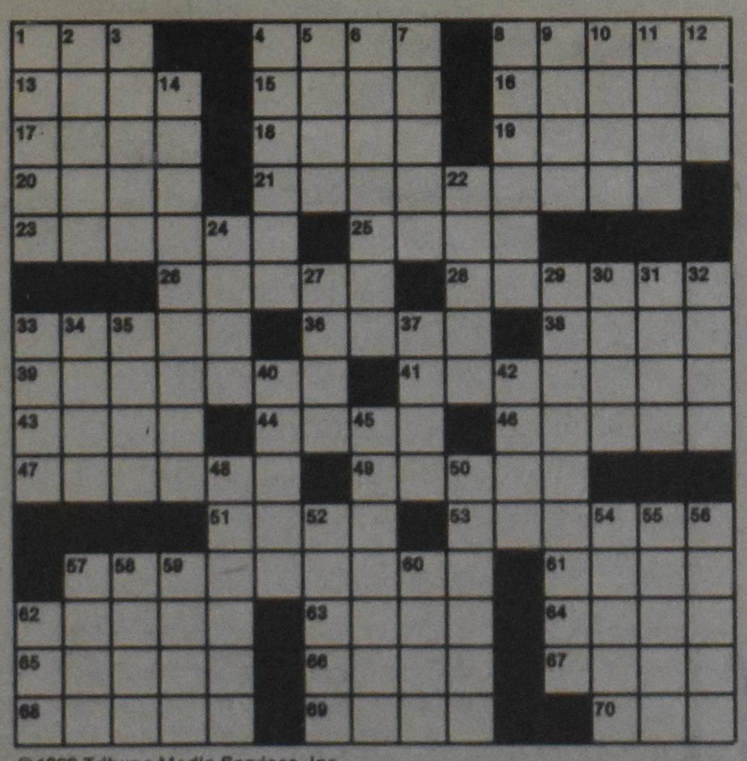
Bad for fur business

Another factor which slowed Canada's population growth was that, until 1870, a large area west and north of Hudson Bay was in the control of the fur traders who didn't want settlers interfering with their lucrative business. The census taken in 1871 shows Canada with a population of 3,689,257. Between 1871 and 1940, Canada admitted 6,313,112 immigrants and in the same period there was a natural increase of 7,027,902. This means the 1941 census should have shown a population of about 17 million. In fact, the 1941 population was 11,523,616. What happened to the missing five-and-a-half million people?

Some of the immigrants might simply have gone back home, but it is extremely likely that as many as five million people in that 70-year period simply moved from Canada to the more populous United States. To this day the United States is a powerful magnet for Canadians. Statistics show that more than two million Canadian citizens have permanent residence status in the U.S. Most of them are retired people. There are no figures to indicate the number of former Canadians who are working in the United States as U.S. citizens.

Florida used to be the favourite retirement haven for Canadians but that position now is held by California where more than 160,000 Canadian citizens have taken up residence, according to a 1985 survey.

Weekly puzzle by Norma Steinberg



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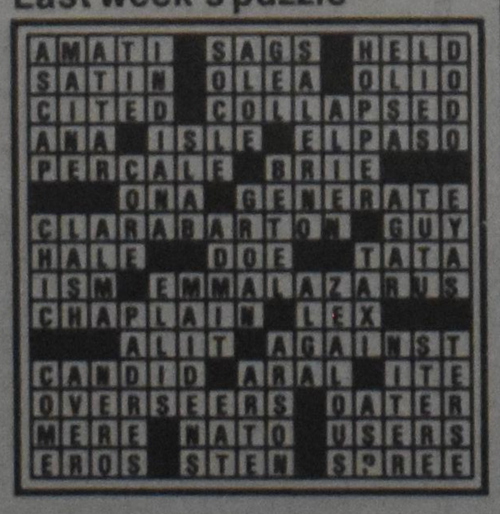
ACROSS
1 Mao follower
4 Mimics
8 Effrontery
13 Jezebel's husband
15 Cavort
16 CSA signature
17 Fury
18 Sleuth's find
19 Beginning
20 — code
21 Starry area
23 Christmas tree choice
25 Too bad!
26 Fortunetelling card
28 Lure
33 Large trucks
36 Mr. Arnaz
38 — avis
39 Inducted
41 Packed like sardines
43 Aleutian island
44 "— silly question ..."
46 Florist's need
47 Ruby of old films
49 Concluded
51 "September —"
53 Flowers
57 "Klute" star
61 "Damn Yankees" heroine
62 Wit
63 Peasant
64 Woman
65 Surrounded by
66 Ms Millay
67 Unwrap
68 Shopping —
69 Colors
70 Hit show sign

DOWN
1 "— Bulba"
2 Keen
3 Keen
4 William Tell
5 Marco —
6 Take after
7 Brief period
8 Look casually
9 Gambling town
10 In addition
11 Plant
12 Coterie
14 Comely
22 Ell
24 Play's crew
27 Tout's figures
29 Plated creature
30 Speakers' platform
31 Alencon's department
32 Old horses
33 Pierre's state: abbr.
34 Modern artist
35 Spouse
37 Getz
40 "The — jealousy heareth all..."
42 Eternally
45 JFK part
48 Come forth
50 Rigg and Ross
52 Lassoed
54 Cleansers
55 — statesman
56 "Just — to drugs"
57 Vault
58 God of love
59 Not any
60 Completed
62 Owns

Last week's puzzle



Calendar of Events

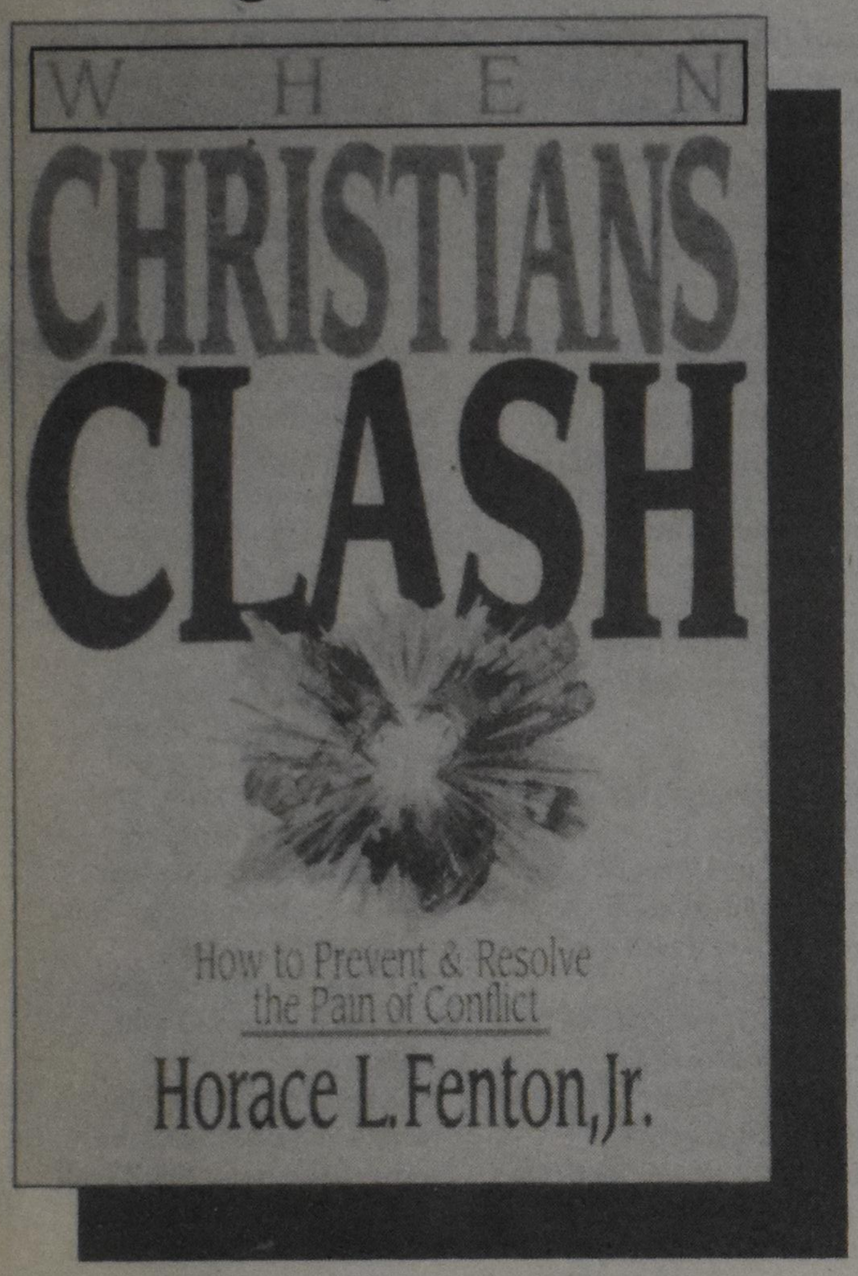
Dec. 16	Christmas concert by the Mountainview Singers, 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.
Dec. 16	Christmas concert by Leendert Kooy's O.C.M.A. with organist Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m., Willowdale United Church, **Willowdale,** Ont. For tickets call (416) 636-9779.
Dec. 17	Candlelight service with the Adoramus-Maranatha Choir (dir. John Hunse), 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **York,** Ont.
Dec. 17	Annual Christmas concert by St. Thomas & District Male Choir and St. Thomas Ladies' Choir at 8 p.m., First United Church, **St. Thomas,** Ont.
Dec. 17	Christmas concert by the Brampton Chr. Choral Society "Praise the Lord (dir. Wm. Hoekstra) and organist Wim van Suydam. At 8 p.m., Second CRC, **Brampton,** Ont.
Dec. 20	Christmas concert by Leendert Kooy's O.C.M.A. with organist Andre Knevel. At 8 p.m., Rehoboth CRC, **Bowmanville,** Ont. For tickets call (416) 636-9779.
Dec. 22	Candlelight service with the Adoramus-Maranatha Choir (dir. John Hunse), 8 p.m., Mt. Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont.
Dec. 23	Christmas concert by the choir "New Life" (dir. David Braun) and the Male Chorus (dir. G. Hoekstra), 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.
Dec. 29	The Ambassadors and organist Christiaan Teeuwsen in concert, 8 p.m., Knox Presb. Church, **St. Catharines,** Ont. Admission $5.00 p.p., $3.00 for children.
Jan. 13	Conference on Liturgy and Music "Lent-Easter Worship" at Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Registration $25 p.p. by Jan. 4. For info. phone (416) 648-2131.
Jan. 18	CFFO Board meets from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. in the CRC, **Georgetown,** Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.) or (519) 338-3214 (p.m.).

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Christian living

Settling arguments and feuds



When Christians Clash: How to Prevent and Resolve the Pain of Conflict, by Horace L. Fenton, Jr., Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1987. Softcover, 158 pp., $8.75 U.S. Reviewed by Helen Tangelder, Williamsburg, Ont.

"'He hasn't been to my place for 20 years!' he told me with a grudge in his voice. 'He's been an elder in our church and he will have nothing to do with me!'"

Does this sound familiar? Have you ever been involved in a family feud, or worse yet, witnessed an outburst at a church meeting from which the hurts were carried for months?

Remember the 1970s when young people had long hair and wore faded jeans to church? Discussions about it were endless. I know of one church in which any man with a beard was not allowed into the sanctuary. And another church which split over the issue of whether adults who were baptized should be immersed backwards or forwards.

You can undoubtedly add to the list of strong opinions on worship styles, dress codes and various trivial matters. Majoring in minors!

We have all come up against these situations and have thrown up our hands in despair, walked out of the room, or simply tuned out our opponent. But what *should* we do when there is a difference of opinion?

Horace Fenton's book is timely and he knows his subject. Fenton was general director of the Latin American Mission in a culture where emotions run high and grudges and memories can be long. He has had first-hand experience with missionaries who "couldn't stand each other" or who were working in the "wrong" place.

There are no easy answers, but in this very practical and spiritual book, Dr. Fenton lays down some principles that can apply to pastors, church council members, relatives — and us.

Takes scripture's lead

What I appreciate most is Fenton's constant reference to scripture as his basis. The Word of God not only gives us hope but very practical instruction on personal relationships in all kinds of situations.

Scriptures shows us many who were in conflict: Abraham and Lot; Joseph's brother against him; Paul and Barnabas; church problems in Galatia. Church life in the days of the Acts was not easy, and it's no easier now.

That's why Fenton's book is helpful. How did the Christians in Antioch resolve their conflict? How did the Greek and Aramaic Jews solve their cultural differences? Who was right, who was wrong? Is it possible to agree to disagree?

"We are fallible human beings. Scripture clearly teaches this and everyday lives bear it out. Even Christians 'know in part.' Our very best judgments are flawed because we lack full perspective on things we judge" (p. 108).

"There is room for the Christian grace of forgiveness and accompanying with loving restoration" (p. 109).

Fenton gives us pointers and steps to help solve broken relationships. Is it possible to love your enemy? To forgive and understand those who are against you? There *is* hope that barriers can be broken, and when there is misunderstanding, healing can take place — through Christ, as led by the Spirit.

Thanks to Horace Fenton for making readers aware of the importance of getting along together as fellow believers so "they will know we are Christians by our love" and so that Christ's name will be glorified.

Recommended reading for any Christian, and especially for church libraries.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Lifted hands

"Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place." **(Ps. 28:2)**

Sometimes two hands aren't enough. One writer tells of the morning her son came in from play begging for something to eat. They finally settled on a slice of bread smothered in peanut butter. "But," she said, "You have to eat it outside!"

He was only three. Most doors he could open by wrapping one hand around the knob and sort of dropping his body till turning and pulling became part of the same motion.

But the outside door was different. It needed two hands. And that slice of bread was filling one! What to do? His was a creative little mind. He slapped the bread against the wall, peanut butter first. It stuck while he grabbed at the knob with both hands. And once the door was open, the bread pealed away from the wall nearly good as new!

Amazing tools

Our hands are amazing tools. There are 30 different joints in the bones of our hands and their movements are controlled by more than 50 muscles. Researchers estimate that a typical hand can assume approximately 300 million different useful positions while doing the average of 1,000 separate functions that we assign to it in a day! One-third of the sense organs of our bodies are located in our hands. John Webster called them "curious engines," and Immanuel Kant said they were "the outside brain of man."

Helen Keller, blind and deaf from early childhood, describes the incredible sensation of "listening" with her hands. She tells of the time when the cover was removed from phonograph speakers and her hand was placed against the vibrating membrane itself. It was Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. "I could sense ... the passion of the rhythm, the pulsation and swell of music," she said. "And the great choir beat sharply against my fingers with its waves and pulses!"

What a feeling!

Can't slow down

The great pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff was in the middle of a concert tour when he took ill; doctors found cancer. Rachmaninoff knew he was dying. He held up his hands, marvellous producers of magnificent music, and said, "My dear hands. Farewell, my poor hands."

What would we do without hands? I think of that as I type these words. Latham Sholes, who first put together a working model of the typewriter in the mid-1800s, found that the keys would jam if the typist went too fast. He deliberately figured out a configuration for the keys that would slow us down. It's the standard keyboard on all English typewriters and computer keyboards, an arrangement called QWERTY. And still our fingers learn and our hands produce!

Sensitive expressions

Our hands speak: the grasp of friendship; the touch of healing; the caress of love. Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote:

First time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
And, ever since, it grew more clean and white.

Our hands create. John Heming said of Shakespeare, "His mind and hand went together." What a productive combination! And who can fail to be amazed at the wonders that leaped from the hands of Michelangelo?

Our hands can destroy as well. Pilate washed his hands of Jesus' blood, but pointed the way to his death. Lady Macbeth couldn't cleanse her hands of murderous designs with all the water of earth's oceans. And poet Dylan Thomas speaks in ghastly wonder at "The hand that signed the paper ...," "five sovereign fingers" that condemned a society to death.

But most important of all, our hands pray. From the depths of his sorrow, from the tragedy of his circumstances, David lifted his hands toward heaven.

When the voice is gone, when the eyes grow dim, when the tongue thickens, our hands still speak. Lifted hands; pleading hands; needy hands. And five fingers of love, scarred by the print of nails, grasp us in the never failing handshake of grace.

Here a little child I stand,
Heaving up my either hand;
Cold as paddocks though they be,
Here I lift them up to Thee ....

(Robert Herrick)

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